

THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF
CLEVERNESS

Manuscripts, to receive prompt attention, should be addressed, "Editor of THE SMART SET."

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Issued monthly by John Adams Thayer Corporation

JOHN ADAMS THAYER, President

452 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

WM. P. VOORHEES, Secretary

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THE JUNE SMART SET

NEXT month's issue will contain a complete novelette which will be quite different from anything THE SMART SET has published in a great many months.

It will be presented complete in one number. A two-part story in THE SMART SET is exceptional. Sometimes a feature is so remarkable in many ways as to warrant its use in more than one installment, but the cardinal principle of THE SMART SET is to make every issue complete in itself.

The novelette for the June issue will be "The New Italy," by **Robert Carlton Brown**, a story dealing with the immigration question. Mr. Brown has done a searching piece of investigation of this many-sided problem, and has produced a story of intense interest that bears the imprint of the strictest fidelity to truth. The author shows some of the features of American life that impress most unfavorably the foreigner who comes here under the beguilement of golden hopes. How and where his hero finds the paradise he had been taught awaited him here is the rather startling denouement of this story, which is one of the best pieces of realism submitted to this office in a twelvemonth.

Freeman Tilden, whose satires already published in this magazine have aroused much comment because of their unflinching ability to hit the mark, will in the June issue fire some hot shot at the professional patriot, the man who is first in the ranks of hurrahing paraders, first among patriotic orators—and last in the volunteers for actual fighting. "The Man with a Country," Mr. Tilden has termed this story. Thousands of readers, especially those residing in the smaller cities, will be able to appreciate the fidelity with which the author has drawn his leading character.

Basil Macdonald Hastings' series of three stories of children is concluded in this June number, in which the "Tribe," as he terms this family of irrepressible kids, grows up, and its career of backyard piracy, slaughter of Indians, wars with



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(July)

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MAY, 1914

No. 1.

THE SMART SET

SMART—Clever; witty; acute; quick; lively.—*Webster's Dictionary.*

THE ASSAULT OF WINGS

By Charles G. D. Roberts

Ever since man began to fly, it has been a favorite speculation as to what would happen if an aviator were attacked in midair by a flock of giant birds. Mr. Roberts, as a widely known writer on animal life, is the man best fitted to write the story of such a battle; and the account he gives here is real and thrilling.

IN his high place in the unclouded blue, a thousand feet above the topmost pinnacle of Bald Face, the great white-headed eagle stared downward toward the far-off reek and roofs of the busy town by the sea. It was not often that his eyes troubled themselves to turn in that direction; for all his concern was with the inland lakes and water-courses which linked themselves tranquilly about the spreading bases of Old Bald Face, and he hated the acrid smoke clouds which rose from the chimneys of the town. But this morning his gaze—that miraculous vision which could scrutinize a rabbit or an ailing lamb at a distance when our best eyes would hardly discern an elephant—had been caught by an apparition which amazed and disconcerted him.

Flying in wide circles above a green field on the outskirts of the city was a gigantic bird, in form and stature quite unlike any other bird that the great eagle had ever seen. As it passed over a red brick cottage at one corner of the field, quite blotting it from view for an instant, he got an impression of its incredible size, and felt, with a pang of

angry dread, that his own stately dimensions would have seemed little better than a sparrow's beside it. Its vast white wings were square at the tip and of the same width from tip to base—an inexplicable innovation in wings—and he noted with apprehension that they flew without any motion at all.

He himself, soaring in the blue heights as he was, flew almost without motion of the wings, riding by subtle poise and balance on the thrust of the light aerial draught. But even now, the breeze failing, he had to recover his impetus by a rushing descent. He tipped his snowy head and shoulders forward, and the air hissed sharply in the tense web of the hinder edges of his wings as he swept down the viewless slopes of air, turning upward again after a swoop of a hundred yards or so—which was as nothing at that height. A slow stroke or two restored him to his former level, with impetus to spare for his splendid, effortless soaring. But meanwhile he had not taken his eyes for a moment from that portentous shape circling so mysteriously above the green field on the outskirts of the town. And he had not seen it

May, 1914-1

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OF
NASHVILLE

either swoop or mount, or once flap its flat-spread wings.

Moved from his accustomed arrogant indifference, the eagle flew over toward the town to get a better look at this disquieting phenomenon. On nearer approach he made out that the monstrous, square-winged bird was ridden by one of those man creatures whom he so hated and despised—ridden as he had seen, with wonder and scorn, that horses permitted themselves to be. The man sat in a hollow in the strange bird's back, between its wings, and seemed to master and guide it, even as he would master and guide a horse.

The eagle hated man, because man was the only creature that had ever given him, hitherto, the loathed sensation of fear. He despised man, because he saw the proud and cunning creature chained to earth, compelled to crawl upon earth's surface even as a sheep or a woodchuck. But now, if man were able to ride the dwellers of the air, there would be no escaping his tyranny.

The eagle had been conscious for some moments of a curious humming roar in his ears, the source of which was not at once obvious to him. Suddenly he realized that it was the noise of the blunt-winged monster's flight. The realization daunted him. How was it possible that such an awful sound should come from those unmoving wings? He was inclined to turn and fly back to the shelter of Old Bald Face. But after a moment's irresolution his stout heart rose to the magnitude of the peril. He flew onward, till soon he was directly over the field—but so high that to the spectators around the edges of the field he was a scarcely visible speck against the blue.

At this moment the aeroplane began to mount skyward. It scaled the air swiftly, in a steep spiral. The eagle was almost panic-stricken to observe that even now, when mounting so directly, it did not flap its wings, although there was no wind on which to rise. At the curious blunt beak of the monster he discerned a sort of circle of faint haze, a bluish blur; but this was something which did not seem to concern him, and

he made no effort to understand it. What did concern him was the fact that the monster, with its human rider, was apparently coming up after him. His courage and his curiosity gave way together, and he fled back in a panic to his ledge in the recesses of Old Bald Face.

The extreme summit of Bald Face was a level plateau of granite some dozen of acres in extent, with a needlelike pinnacle of splintered granite at its eastern or seaward end. The broad southeastern face of the summit was of naked granite, whitened by the storm and frost of ages—whence the name of Old Bald Face. But between this bleak, wind-harried front and the rich plain country by the sea were many lesser pinnacles and ridges, with deep ravines between, all clothed with dark spruce woods and tangled undergrowth. Around to full south, and west and north, lay an infertile region, thin-soiled and rocky, producing little timber but hemlock and stunted paper birch, and therefore not worth the attention of either the lumberman or the squatter. The whole of this district was interlaced with watercourses and sown with lakes having their ultimate outlet in the tidal estuary which washed the wharves of the town.

If the land in this region skirting Bald Face was barren, its waters were not. They swarmed with fish—lake trout, whitefish and huge suckers, as well as the ordinary brook trout. They supplied hunting ground, therefore, for not only a number of fishhawks, but also for no less than three pairs of the fishhawks' dreaded tyrants, the white-headed eagles. These three pairs of eagles had their nests in the uppermost and most inaccessible ledges of Bald Face. And the wild country below was divided among them into six ranges, each great bird having his or her own hunting ground, upon which not even their own mates could poach with impunity.

The nests of the three royal pairs were all within a distance of perhaps a half-mile of each other, but each was austere-ly secluded and jealously hidden from its neighbors. Each pair regarded its neighbors with a coldly tolerant aversion

and kept an aloof but vigilant watch upon them, as possible poachers.

When the first eagle, smitten with fear by the vision of the swiftly mounting aeroplane, fled back to his eyrie to warn his fierce-eyed mate of this portentous monster of the air, his perturbation was detected by the female of the next pair, who chanced to be homing at that moment with a fish for her hungry nestlings. Fear seems to travel by some uncomprehended but very efficient wireless; and fear in the lords of the air was a thing too unusual to be ignored. Hastily depositing her burden, the newcomer flapped upward and around to the east, till she, too, caught sight of the mounting monoplane. It was far off, indeed, but already so high above earth that to her eyes it stood out dark and sinister against the pale expanse of sea beyond the town. She flapped over for a nearer view, flew close enough to hear the mysterious roar of the motor and to detect the man creature riding the monster's neck, and fled back to her nestlings with rage and terror at her heart. No longer could she feel secure on the dizziest and remotest ledges of the peaks; no longer were even the soundless deeps of sky inaccessible to man! Within an hour every eagle of Bald Face knew of this dreadful invasion of their hitherto impregnable domain. It was the time of year when their nestlings were most helpless. And that is the time of year when the white-headed eagles will face all odds with an incomparable ferocity of valor, at the hint of menace to their skyey homes.

The airman at the town of X— was one Rob MacCreedy, who had recently been making a name for himself at the aviation grounds some hundred miles down the coast. He had come up to X— primarily to turn a needed penny by exhibition flights and passenger carrying, over the spacious and level fields behind the town. But his secondary object was to experiment with the dangerous eddies and wind holes that were likely to be met with above the profound ravines of Bald Face and its buttressing hills. His purpose was to go to Europe and win fame by some sen-

sational flights over the Alps or the Pyrenees; and having a very practical Canadian ambition to survive for the enjoyment of the fame he planned to win, he was determined to prepare himself effectively for the perils that would confront him.

But MacCreedy had another object in view, which he did not talk about lest matter-of-fact folk should call him childish. He wanted to see what there was on top of Old Bald Face. That gaunt gray summit was regarded as practically unscalable. It had indeed been scaled, men said, some thirty or forty years ago, after desperate effort and altogether hair-raising adventure, by a greatly daring trapper, who had barely survived to tell of his exploit. Since then—the men of X— not being wholehearted or skilled mountain climbers—all such attempts had ended in failure. Among the legends which had gathered about the austere summit there was none to suggest that gold might be found thereon, else the cloudy sanctuary had doubtless been violated without unnecessary delay. But the traditions handed down from the adventure of that old trapper were as stimulating to MacCreedy's imagination as any myth of quartz vein or nugget could have been. They told of a remarkable level plateau, like a table for the gods, with a little lake of black crystal set in the center of it, ice cold and of unfathomable depth. It was, in effect, according to tradition, bottomless!

To MacCreedy's eager and boyish imagination this lofty plateau and this mysterious uninvestigated lake were irresistible. He was determined to know more about them both. And as the top of Bald Face, for all its inaccessibility, was less than five thousand feet above sea level, his monoplane seemed to offer him an easy way to it.

The third day after MacCreedy's arrival at X— was windless, and without a cloud in the blue. The air almost sparkled with its clarity, and there was an unspringlike tang in it which made MacCreedy's nerves tingle for adventure. After he had given the crowd their money's worth in swift mountings

and breath-taking volplanes, he started off, at a height of some two thousand feet, toward the mountain, standing pallid and grim against the intense blue. He mounted swiftly as he went; and the spectators stared after him doubtfully till they grasped his purpose.

"He's going to visit the top of Old Bald Face," went the murmur around the crowded edges of the field. And a feeling that he might bring back some interesting information made them content to wait, without grumbling, for his return.

Since their first sight of the giant-winged monster soaring and humming over X—, the eagles of Bald Face had not dared to venture far from home in their foragings. Their nerves were raw with angry anxiety for their nests. MacCreedy, as he came within a mile or two of the mountain, took note of an eagle not far ahead, circling at a higher level than himself.

"The old bird thinks he can fly some," mused MacCreedy, "but I bet I'm going to give him the surprise of his life!"

A few moments more and he was himself surprised, as the solitary sentinel was joined by another, and another, and another; till presently there were six of the great birds flapping and whirling between him and Bald Face, about at the level of the edge of the plateau.

"Seem to be as interested in aeroplanes as any of us humans!" thought MacCreedy, and gave his planes a lift that should carry him over the plateau at a height of not much over a hundred feet. He would make a hasty observation first, then circle around and effect a landing if the surface looked smooth enough for him to attempt it without too much risk. He was surprised somewhat by the attitude of the eagles, who were now circling nearer and seemed to be more angry than curious or terrified at his approach. Then his attention was abruptly withdrawn from their threatening evolutions. It was all required, and that urgently, by the aeroplane.

Having arrived over the deeply cleft and ridged outworks of Bald Face, the

aeroplane had plunged into a viewless turmoil of air currents and vortices. It dropped, with startling suddenness, into a "pocket" and felt as if a vacuum had opened beneath it. MacCreedy saw a vicious granite ridge, whiskered with fir trees, lurch up at him insanely from a thousand feet below. He was almost upon it before his planes bit upon solid air again and glided off from the peril, slanting upward rockingly over a gaping abyss. Yelping with triumph, the eagles had swooped down after him; but he could not hear their cries, of course, through the roar of the Gnome; and of eagles, at that moment, he was thinking not at all.

Realizing the imminence of his danger from these vortices, MacCreedy changed his course and swept back again as fast as he could toward the open, his machine careering wickedly in the eddies and upthrusts of air. He decided that he must get far above this area of disturbance, and then spiral down directly over the plateau, when, as he calculated, the currents would be less tumultuous.

The eagles, imagining that the loud monster had been put to flight by their threats, came following in its wake, determined to see it safely off their premises and give it no time to recover from what they conceived to be its panic. But they were far too sagacious to attack and force a more than doubtful conflict. They were filled with awe of this gigantic being which flew with rigid wings and such appalling roar, yet allowed itself to be ridden by the man between its shoulders. They were perplexed, too, by the fierce wind which streamed out behind its level wings. Their amazement was heightened by the fact that their own long and powerful wings, which were able to overtake so easily the flight of the agile fishhawk, were forced to beat furiously in order to keep up with this incomprehensible stranger who was apparently making no effort at all.

A swift motor car, which had followed MacCreedy's flight at top speed across the plain, had halted at the point where the highway passed nearest to the broken and impassable region surrounding the

mountain. Its occupants, watching MacCreedy's movements through their field glasses, and noting the great birds crowding behind him, thought at first that the eagles had put him to flight and forced him to give up his venture. They were undeceived, however, when they saw him turn—at such a height that even to their powerful glasses the pursuing eagles were no more than specks—and soar back till he was directly over the summit.

At the height which he had now gained the air was icy cold but still as a dream. The world below looked like a vast, shallow bowl, the sides concaving upward around him to the horizon. Two-thirds of this horizon rim were of dark green woods threaded with the gleaming silver of watercourses. The remaining third was of sea, which looked as if it overhung the town of X—and was withheld only by a miracle from flowing in and filling the bowl. Directly beneath him, two to three thousand feet down, the mighty summit of Old Bald Face looked insignificant. It lay outspread quite flat and shelterless in the sun, its secrets clean revealed—and there, sure enough, at its center, was the pool of tradition, gleaming upward glassy still. At the same time he saw, though without much interest, the eagles. They were very far below him now, hardly above the level of the plateau, flying in occasionally over its edges, but for the most part circling out above the surrounding gulfs. In a casual way MacCreedy inferred that they must have nests in the ledges of the precipices.

In a somewhat narrow spiral he now began his descent—gradually, and under power, that he might be in full readiness to grapple with the treacherous gusts which came leaping up at him from under the brink of the plateau. He was surprised to see that as he descended the eagles rose hurriedly to meet him. But at first he paid no attention to them, being intent upon the search for a good landing place, and upon the mystery of that sky-inhabiting pool. A minute or two more, however, and it was no longer possible for him to ignore the approaching birds, who were rising at him with

unmistakable manifestations of rage. For the first time it occurred to him that they might be thinking he had come to rob their nests. "Plucky beggars!" he said to himself admiringly. "To think of showing fight to a grown-up aeroplane!"

The next moment, as he noted the spread of those flapping wings, the shining, snowy, outstretched heads and necks, the firm and formidable half-opened beaks, a sweat of apprehension broke out all over him. What if one of the misguided birds should foul his propeller, or come blundering aboard and snap a stay or a control wire? The idea of being dashed to pieces in that skyey solitude was somehow more daunting to his spirit than the prospect which he faced indifferently every day, that of being hurled down upon familiar earth.

For a few seconds MacCreedy was tempted to drive his planes heavenward again and withdraw from the situation, to return another day with a passenger and a shotgun for his defense. Then he grew angry and obstinate. He had come to explore the summit of Bald Face; and he was not going to be balked by a flock of birds. He was low enough now to satisfy himself that the plateau afforded a good landing, so he dipped his descent to a steeper angle, making haste to get through the suspense.

Immediately the eagles were all about him. To his relief they seemed afraid to fly directly in front of him, as if apprehending that this monstrous bird of his might carry some terrible weapon on its blunt-faced beak. Mounting swiftly, they passed the descending aeroplane on either side, and then gathered in above it, swooping and yelping. Through the roar of his motor MacCreedy caught the strident shrillness of their cries. He felt that at any moment one might pluck up courage to pounce upon the plane or upon his head. He wondered if his leather cap would be stout enough to resist the clutch of those edged talons which he saw opening and shutting viciously above him. He wished himself safely landed.

He was low enough now to choose his

landing place. He was just about to shut off the engine for the final glide, when one of the female eagles, growing desperate, swooped and struck the right wing of the plane, not far from its tip. The extended talons went right through the cloth, tearing a long gash, and before the bird could recover herself she was caught by one of the strong wires that braced the wing. The aeroplane rocked under her struggles, but in the next moment she was thrown clear, so badly crumpled that she fell topsy-turvy through the air for some little distance before she could pull her wits together and right herself. Then, disheveled and cowed, she flew off to one side, with no more stomach left for another assault.

MacCreedy had brought his plane to a level keel, the better to withstand the attack. Now he laughed grimly, and resumed his descent. Almost in the same instant he realized that an immense eagle was swooping straight at his head. He ducked—the only way to save his face. The grasping claws sunk deep into his shoulders. With a yell he straightened himself backward violently. His assailant, unable for a moment to free his claws from the tough tweed of the jacket, and swept backward by the rush of the plane, plunged down among the supporting stays, where he struggled and flapped wildly to extricate himself.

Smarting with pain and wrath, and with his heart in his mouth lest the stays should snap and the planes collapse, MacCreedy cut off the power and slid sharply downward. The eagle behind him got free and flapped off, much daunted by the encounter. The remaining four birds hung immediately over the swiftly dropping plane, but hesitated to attack after the rough experience of their fellows.

MacCreedy touched ground at somewhat higher speed than he had calculated upon, and found the level stone, swept by the storms of ages, so smooth that his wheels ran along it much too easily. Thus he found himself confronted by a new peril. Could he check himself before reaching the brink? He steered a long curve around the edge of the shining pool, gathered his legs under him so that

he might jump clear if necessary—and came to a stop with his vacillating propeller almost peering over the abyss. Just before him was a drop of a cool thousand feet. He sprang out, hauled the machine back a dozen yards or so, and drew the longest breath of relief that had been forced from his lungs since his first ventures in aeroplaning.

Then he snatched the heaviest wrench from his tool kit, and turned in a rage to settle accounts with his tormentors.

But the eagles were now in a less militant frame of mind. Two of their number had had more than enough, and were already flapping back dejectedly toward their nests. The others seemed to realize that the monster, now that its rider had dismounted, was merely another of the man creature's tools, such as a boat or a canoe, inanimate and harmless except when its dreaded master chose to animate it. Moreover, now that MacCreedy was out of the machine, erect upon his feet, glaring up at them with masterful eyes, and shouting at them in those human tones which all the wild kindreds find so disconcerting, they were much more afraid of him than before. Their anger began to die away into a more nervous dread and aversion. It seemed to occur to them that perhaps, after all, the man was not after their nests. He was nowhere near them. They yelped indignantly at him and flew off to perch on their eyries and brood over the problem.

MacCreedy watched them go, and dropped his weapon back into the kit. Then he went over his precious machine minutely, to assure himself that it had sustained no damage except that slit in one wing, which was not enough to give serious trouble. Then, with a rush of exultation, he ran over to examine the mysterious pool. He found it beautiful enough, in its crystal clear austerity; but, alas, its utter clearness was all that was needed to shatter its chief mystery. It was deep, indeed; but it was certainly not bottomless, for he could discern its bottom, from one shore or the other, in every part. He contented himself, however, with the thought that there was mystery enough for the most exacting in the

mere existence of this deep and brimming tarn on the crest of a granite peak. As far as he could judge from his reading, which was extensive, this smooth flat granite top of Bald Face, with its little pinnacle at one end, and its deep transparent tarn in the center, was unlike any other known summit in the world. He was contented with his explorations, and ready now to return and tell about them.

But if content with his explorations, he was far from content on the score of his adventure with the eagles. He felt that it had been rather more of a close call than it appeared; and there was nothing he desired less than an immediate repetition of it. What he dreaded was that the starting of the motor might revive the fears of the great birds in regard to their nests, and bring them once more swooping upon him. He traversed the circuit of the plateau, peering downward anxiously, and at last managed roughly to locate the three nests. They were all on the south and southeast faces of the summit. Well, he decided that he would get off as directly and swiftly as possible, and by way of

the northwest front—and by this self-effacing attitude, he trusted to convince the touchy birds that he had no wish to trespass upon their domesticity.

He allowed himself all too brief a run, and the plane got into the air but a few feet before reaching the brink. So narrow a margin was it, indeed, that he caught his breath with a gasp before she lifted. It looked as if he were going to dive into space. But he rose instead—and as he sailed out triumphantly across the abyss the eagles came flapping up over the rim of the plateau behind. They saw that he was departing, so they sank again to their eyries, and congratulated themselves on having driven him away. A few minutes later, at an unprovocative height, he swept around and headed for home. As he came into view once more to the anxious watchers in the automobile, who had been worried over his long disappearance, the car turned and raced back over the plain to X—, ambitious to arrive before him and herald his triumph. The fact that that triumph was not altogether an unqualified one remained a secret between MacCreedy and the eagles.



VIRGIN ISLE

By Florence Brooks

I AM the isle of mystery out at sea,
 Lapped in a turquoise flood from gulfs afar,
 Illumined by a solitary star,
 Where lonely winds wail through ravine and tree
 And sigh unceasingly, O Love, for thee,
 Who wanderest fatally through froth and spar,
 Carried by mighty waters toward that bar
 Whereon fate's tempest casts thee unto me.

Oh, in what guise com'st thou unto this land
 Lying in unmapped freedom at thy feet?
 Shall this calm breast offer a barren fruit
 To thy sad lips? Is it a languid hand
 That holds the flower? Or shall the waters sing
 A mighty chant of conquest to a king?

YOU NEVER CAN TELL

By George Sterling

SPINDRIFT and bilge and the world turns over!
What is the dross and what the gold?
The snake and the lark ha' nests in the clover,
And which is best when the tale is told?

Thrice I sinned—oh, the heavens' joyance!
Breasts angelic shook wi' the joke;
Once did good—oh, earth's annoyance!
Hell to pay and the bank gone broke!

James drank poison at love's derision;
John swigged ale, and swank in the sun,
Throve, and came to a dark decision,
And, "Christ—that I were the other one!"

Seth in the swamp and Dan on the mountain—
Either dreamt that he chose his times:
Dan bent young to a fevered fountain;
Seth grew old by the older slimes.

The stolen dollar in Larry's pocket
Turned a bullet to Harry's side—
It missed by a hair his mother's locket:
The thief lives yet and the good man died.

Justice! Justice! Where is thy palace,
Hope o' the planet's dark romance?
Whose is the blood in thy broken chalice,
Slave o' chance? But there is no chance!



"ISN'T it a shame the prices these New York restaurants charge!"
"But isn't it worth something to entertain the class of people they have to?"



THE ability to understand is superior to the habit of sympathizing.

persons mutilating, or writing upon
books, magazines, furniture or walls will
be prosecuted to the extent of the law.

THE HOUSE IN DEMETRIUS ROAD

By J. D. Beresford

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS—Martin Bond becomes secretary to Robin Greg, a socialistic writer, who lives in a small house in a suburb of London. Greg is eccentric and unbearably caustic, though at times his manner is cordial and full of boyish ingenuousness. Martin attempts to solve the mystery and makes an effort to get on frank and confidential terms with Margaret Hamilton, Greg's sister-in-law, but finds himself held at a distance. At times he thinks he cannot bear the atmosphere of the place any longer, but he is held by his sympathy for Margaret. At last he learns from her the truth: that Robin Greg, with all his brilliancy, is practically a drunkard; has been under the influence of liquor for nearly the whole period that Martin has been in the house.

One evening Greg returns late with his hand and arm covered with blood and tells a long maudlin story of how it has happened. Martin and Margaret agree that they must unite in some action to save Greg. Martin secures a formula for a cure for alcoholism, and induces Greg to take it. The first night he insists upon staying up with his patient. Greg takes the medicine, but later attempts to eject Martin from his room, even threatening him with a razor. In his weakness, however, he is easily forced back to bed. Martin looks at his watch and finds that it is only half past three in the morning.

XIV

GREG was lying on his back, breathing heavily, his eyes closed. It was impossible to say whether he was awake or asleep. He looked utterly exhausted and yet as if his rest were bringing him no refreshment.

After a few minutes Martin turned away. He went to the dressing table, collected the razors and put them in a drawer. He looked about to see if there was any other thing that could be used as a weapon, but he could see none. He was perfectly aware within himself that all these precautions were now futile, that he need anticipate no further trouble; but he drove himself to the task deliberately, as some kind of discipline for his habit of taking things for granted.

When he returned to the fireside the time was a quarter past four.

He settled himself down for another four hours' vigil. He felt sleepy now, but he was determined that he would not go to sleep. He sat upright and tried to fix his attention on the book he

had brought; when his head drooped he rose and took two or three turns up and down the room. Once or twice he bathed his face in cold water.

At half past seven he drew up the blind, but no glimmer of dawn had as yet relieved the blackness of the outside world. Only his own strained face stared back at him from behind the window glass.

At eight o'clock he softly unlocked the door and looked out. He could see no one, but he heard the noise of people moving about the house.

He came back into the bedroom and looked at Greg.

He was lying on his side, his back to the door, his right hand laid out on the counterpane. Martin caught sight of some dark object pushing out from beneath the bolster. He leaned over quietly and drew out a traveling flask. It smelt strongly of whiskey, but he found that it was now quite empty.

A few minutes later he heard someone knocking very softly, and he got up and quietly opened the door.

Margaret was standing outside. She

looked at him with slightly raised eyebrows, silently expressing a question.

"I think he's asleep," said Martin in a low voice.

"Is it all right? Have you had any trouble?" she whispered.

"I don't know about its being all right," returned Martin; and then, after a moment's hesitation: "No, I haven't had any trouble."

Margaret came noiselessly into the room and set down a medicine bottle on the table by the bed.

"It's the cure," she said. "I've mixed it according to the directions."

Martin nodded wearily. "Good," he said. "But I suppose we had better not wake him?"

She shook her head. "Do you mind staying here a few minutes longer?" she asked. "And then I'll come and take your place." Then she added, still in the same furtive tone: "Has he been quite quiet all the time?"

"Oh, yes," said Martin, "quite." His new tenderness for that physically defeated antagonist on the bed completely overrode his distaste for lying to Margaret.

"I'm so glad," she murmured as she left the room.

The first dull gray of the December morning was struggling with the yellow glare of the electric light; fading the darkness of the cast shadows, and here and there giving new form and substance to some object that had worn another semblance through the night. Martin switched off the light, leaving the room in half-darkness.

A faint murmur from the bed drew his attention.

"Do you want anything?" he asked.

Again the mumble was repeated, but he could not catch the words and went round to the other side of the bed to listen.

"Do you want anything, old chap?" he asked again.

Greg's eyelids fluttered. "Ye're a good fellow, Bond," he muttered. "I heard what ye said to Maggie."

Martin blushed. "Oh, that's all right," he said. He believed that he knew, now, how this cure might be made a success.

XV

WHEN he went to lie down at ten o'clock, Martin found that he was no longer sleepy; on the contrary, he felt full of a tremendous energy. His mind glowed with enthusiasm. He was eager to take up again his treatment and care of Greg, to bring a new sympathy to his effort, to strengthen the understanding that he believed had been established. He regretted the eight or nine necessarily wasted hours that interposed between him and the renewal of his task.

In his thought of Greg, Martin was single-minded, but the thought of Margaret seemed to offer a strange, incomprehensible opposition. He was no longer working exclusively for her; indeed, he saw that he could persist in his present effort with no failure of enthusiasm if she were absent. In some inexplicable way the confederacy between them had been broken. He had not told her of the events of the night, and had no intention of ever telling her. He had said nothing of that flask secreted under the pillow. He had gone over to the other side, and he had no sense of shame in the knowledge of his desertion; on the contrary, he was warm with a feeling of loyalty for his new ally.

His feeling for Margaret had suffered no change, but she stood, strangely, in a new relation. She occupied, now, the position that both himself and Greg had filled in turn, the position of the single party excluded from the confidence of the other two; and while she thus stood alone he could regard her with a new detachment.

The weight of the empty flask in his pocket recalled him to the necessity for carrying on his trust. He found a hiding place for that damning piece of evidence in his portmanteau, then undressed and went to bed.

Greg was sitting up in bed when Martin came into his room that evening. He looked tired and ill.

"Here," he said, "just shut the door, will ye, and help me into my dressing gown. Ye'll find it in the wardrobe."

Martin was very tender of the wounded hand. "Don't put it through

the sleeve," he said. "I'll just button the thing over your shoulders."

Greg hesitated. "I want ye to do something for me," he said.

"Well, rather, what is it?" said Martin. He felt a little embarrassed, a little like a young lover afraid of appearing too presumptuous.

"There are two—three flasks in the bed," said Greg nervously. "I could not find them myself. I've looked."

"I found one this morning," said Martin, "an empty one. I locked it up in my portmanteau."

"Och! Did ye?" remarked Greg. "Did ye tell Maggie?"

Martin shook his head.

Greg stared at him intently for a moment, and then said, with a touch of grim humor: "Ah, weel, the one ye found was the one I've been searching high and low for. The other two are under the mattress. They're full. I could not get at them in the night, and I have not tried since." He waited a moment as if to let this promise of good behavior penetrate Martin's understanding, and then added: "Ye'll not tell Maggie?"

"Heavens, no!" returned Martin with vigor.

He found the other two flasks, with some little difficulty. They were, indeed, well buried under the heavy mattress. While he searched Greg sat huddled up in the armchair by the fire.

When Margaret and Hester came in to make the bed, Martin went into his own room and locked up the two flasks with the one he had found that morning.

On his return to the other room he found Greg back in bed, sitting up and taking a dose of the cure.

He did not speak again until Martin gave him the other dose at nine o'clock; then, as he lay back in bed, he said: "I'll maybe sleep now. There's no reason why ye should stay with me. There's nothing in the room but maybe a few empty bottles."

"Oh, well, let me stay, old chap," said Martin; and as Greg made no reply, he added: "It's frightfully hot in here; do you mind if I open the window a bit?"

"Please yourself," muttered Greg.

The night passed without any startling incident. About twelve o'clock Greg began to toss uneasily, mumbling to himself and throwing his arms out of bed; and for three hours afterward he was increasingly restless. Once or twice he sat up with a violent shout and stared uncomprehendingly at Martin watching him from the foot of the bed. But soon after three o'clock he seemed to fall into a more restful sleep; his breathing was easier and his whole body more relaxed.

Martin had finished his book when Margaret came in at half past seven bringing the second bottle of the cure. This time he could have said without any hesitation that Greg had most certainly found no hidden supply of whiskey in the night. He wondered if the cure was beginning to take effect.

XVI

"WELL, how's the hand?" asked Martin with an affectation of cheeriness, when he went into Greg's room at five o'clock.

Greg did not reply. He looked more ill than Martin had yet seen him; drawn and gray and unutterably weary, he lay on his back with his hands stretched out on the counterpane, and when he opened his eyes he stared straight up at the ceiling.

"D'ye know how long this sickness is likely to last?" he asked after a long pause. "I've been very sick again to-day. It must be some drug they put in the medicine."

Martin did not know. "It may be only in the first two bottles," he ventured, trying to assume a cheerful confidence. "I could find out, of course."

"I'll give it another trial tomorrow, anyway," said Greg, "but I'll take no more tonight. I'm worn out." He paused again, and then went on: "However, that's not what I wanted to see ye about. I don't wish ye to sit up with me tonight."

"Oh, but I don't mind a bit—" began Martin.

"It's not what *you* mind but what *I* mind," interrupted Greg. "If ye're

going to do me any good at all, ye've got to trust me."

"Of course I know. I quite understand that," said Martin. "It's only for the first day or two—"

"Ye've sat up with me two nights already."

"Well, let me stay one more."

"Ye can search the room," said Greg, "and the house. I lied to ye last night when I said there was none in the room"—he evidently had a strange disinclination to name the thing that had been destroying him—"the two bottles of hairwash on the dressing table are nearly full, and there's another bottle in the dressing case under the portmanteaus on top of the wardrobe. That's all. I'm telling ye the truth, now."

Martin looked his perplexity. How could he know that this was all? The man was so clever. This extraordinary confidence might be another blind.

Greg moved uneasily and turned his face for the first time toward Martin. "It's small wonder that ye doubt me," he said, "but I'm telling ye the truth. Ye must try and trust me."

"Oh, so I do—at least so I will after tonight," stammered Martin. "But I can't see why you shouldn't let me stay just once more."

"It goes against me to be treated that way," said Greg. "I've been thinking of it all the time I've been lying here. Ye're too young and ye don't understand, but I've allowed ye to be here, ye and Maggie, for forty-eight hours, and that should be enough to show ye that I'm in earnest. I could have tricked ye both any time if I'd had a mind to," he added.

"Has Miss Hamilton agreed to—to this?" asked Martin, clinging to a last hope.

"You can discuss it with her," Greg answered, after a thoughtful interval. He turned on his back again, and stared up at the ceiling. "Ye've told her nothing about last night or the night before?" he asked.

"Nothing, not a word," said Martin.

"Well, I'd sooner ye didn't," said Greg, "and ye might take away what

I've just told ye about, and keep a quiet tongue about that, too."

"Very well," Martin acquiesced.

"But when ye've done that," Greg continued, "ye can discuss with her the point I've just indicated, and I'll advise ye that ye'd be better guided to trust me."

"Very well," Martin agreed, rather sadly.

He got up on a chair and dragged out the suitcase, finding the key, by Greg's instruction, in the pocket of an old waistcoat that hung in the wardrobe.

"Lock it and put it back," mumbled Greg when Martin had taken out an unopened bottle of whiskey; "the key's supposed to have been lost."

After that Martin made exploration, guided by his sense of smell, among a dozen or more bottles on the dressing table and washstand, but he found, as Greg had said, that only two of them contained whiskey.

He then went quietly into his own room and added these finds to his own collection. It struck him that he would not like Hester to discover all this secret supply of alcohol, and he separated the key of his portmanteau from the others on the ring and put it in his watch pocket.

"There's nothing else I can do, I suppose?" he asked when he had returned.

Greg shook his head weakly. "Ye can tell Maggie that she may search the room," he said as an afterthought.

Margaret was on the landing when Martin came out. She had evidently been waiting in her own bedroom. She looked at him with that mute interrogation which now had but one significance.

Instead of returning the usual affirmative signal, Martin closed the door of Greg's room behind him.

"I want to talk to you for a few minutes, please," he said. She answered him by a glance at the closed door that said quite plainly: "Can we leave him alone?"

Martin nodded confidently, but she still hesitated, searching his face with a look full of doubt.

He smiled a little uneasily. "We must have a talk," he said. "He has

asked me to do—at least not to do—something.”

They went, as usual, to the bleak, empty drawing room.

“It’s this,” said Martin at once: “he has asked me not to sit up with him tonight. He has insisted that we must trust him. He says we may search the room and the house if we like. I really think it’s safe.”

Margaret did not answer him immediately. She put both hands up to her face and leaned forward, her elbows on her knees.

“He’s tricking us again,” she said at last; “it’s only another failure.”

Martin had a momentary inspiration. “Does your intuition tell you that?” he asked.

She shook her head and sat up. “I seem to have lost all my intuitions where Robin is concerned,” she said. “I don’t know why; I can’t explain. He holds me off so. I can’t get near him. But oh, it’s quite certain that he’s fooling us somehow. I’ve been through it all before. I know the signs so well.” She sighed with a deep quick inhalation as if she were gasping for breath and put her hands to her face again.

Her weakness gave Martin strength. “I know you don’t trust any intuition of mine,” he said, “but somehow I do really feel, now, that he is playing straight with us. I seem to have got into touch with him during the past two days. I feel quite differently about him now.” He stopped and looked down at the floor, and blushed and stammered as he continued:

“I told you, didn’t I, that Mr. Barker said I shouldn’t do any good with him unless I—I ‘loved him,’ was what Mr. Barker said. And I dare say it may sound awfully—rather—rather silly perhaps, to you, but in these last two days, I have—at least—in a way you know—I mean I do care tremendously whether this cure’s going to be a success or not. I know I’m a silly ass and all that, but I do believe we ought to trust him now. It’s—it’s my first intuition.”

Margaret’s eyes were full of tears. If her intuitions had failed her where Robin was concerned, they were grow-

ing daily stronger in relation to Martin; and it seemed to her that this stammering confession of his, so utterly devoid as it was of any sentimental emotion, had given her sight of something fine and sacred, some splendid aspect of love that she had never before understood. If Robin reciprocated Martin’s feeling for him, she could not doubt that the cure would be a success.

“You’re bigger than I am,” she said, after a long pause.

“Oh, no, no,” said Martin earnestly. “You’ll make me feel absolutely beastly if you talk like that. It isn’t that at all. I’m not anything like—” He couldn’t finish his sentence. He got up and stood before the desolate grate, his hands in his coat pockets, his whole attention given apparently to the pattern of the hearthrug.

“It isn’t that at all,” he repeated. “It’s just whether you can trust me—and him.”

“I can trust *you*,” she said, and then, watching his embarrassment, she went on: “And I dare say you’re right. Let’s try it.”

“I believe it’s the best thing to do,” he said, without looking up.

“I suppose he has been confiding in you?” she asked after a pause.

He looked up then and met her regard of him. “You’ve said you trusted me,” was the defense he tried to interpose between them.

“But *you* can’t trust *me*,” It was she, now, who looked down.

“I can,” he said awkwardly. He would have given everything he had to be able to kneel by her and tell her that he would trust her with his whole life.

“Well, *he* can’t trust me, then,” she said.

“He can,” muttered Martin. “And he will, very soon. It’s only just at first. Presently, when he’s a bit better—”

“It must have been something very important,” said Margaret, interrupting his half-inaudible mutterings.

“Not particularly,” he said; “really it wasn’t.”

She got up with a little sign of impatience. “Oh, well,” she said, “we’ve agreed to trust him, and that’s all that

matters. So you need not sit up to-night. That must be rather a relief to you."

"It isn't; not a bit," he returned. "Are you going to search the room?"

"Oh, no; what's the good?" she said, and shrugged her shoulders. "He knows he's safe. If there's any whiskey there, we shan't find it."

"I say, you're not angry with me?" asked Martin, looking up at her beseechingly.

She gave him a bleak, formal smile, that reminded him of her sister's photograph. "Angry? Of course I'm not," she said lightly. "Why should I be angry with you?"

"I don't know," he said miserably.

"I'd better go back to Robin," she said with a little laugh and went out.

At half past eight he went up to help Greg into his dressing gown so that he might get up while his bed was being made.

He had been asleep for two hours, and although his face still looked drawn and gray, he seemed to have lost a little of the weariness that had been so apparent earlier in the day.

He did not speak, however, while he was being helped into the armchair by the fire—plainly he was extraordinarily pulled down and weak—but he held up his hand when Martin was about to call in Margaret and Hester, and said, "Just a minute."

Martin thought that some further confession was coming, and a flash of alarm shot through him.

"I just want to say that—I'm vairy grateful to you, Bond," said Greg.

"Oh, for heaven's sake don't talk rot," returned Martin, flushing.

A flicker of a smile lighted Greg's face for a moment. "Ye're not so polite as ye were," he said.

"I know you better," said Martin.

"And I don't think that ye like me any worse, if that were possible," said Greg slyly.

"No, I don't know that I do," said Martin. "Well, good night, old man."

"Good night, laddie," replied Greg without looking up.

XVII

MARTIN saw comparatively little of Margaret for some days. During the first week of the cure, although the night watch had been definitely abandoned, one or other of them was in Greg's room throughout the day. If any excuse had been needed, it could have been urged that they were nursing him, treating him as an ordinary invalid, but he seemed in no way to resent their presence.

When Martin and Margaret found themselves alone together for a few moments, no further confidences passed between them. She had apparently given up any attempt to discover what had happened on that first Saturday night and the following Sunday. She seemed to rely more upon Martin's strength, to give greater consideration to his opinion; but she wore as yet no air of certain hope for the future, and there was a new reserve in her manner that Martin could not understand.

Both Margaret's reserve and Greg's long silence were broken on Sunday, the eighth day of the cure. Greg was undoubtedly better that morning. He had asked for his dressing gown, and he was sitting up in bed reading a novel. Margaret went up to his room about noon, and she and Robin had a long conversation.

Martin went into the study and tried to read, but his mind refused to consider any subject but the interview that was taking place in the room overhead.

He heard the mumble of Greg's voice disconnectedly, a broken mutter of sound, without any dramatic quality, that conveyed no impression of the scene that was acting—he might have been learning verse by heart like a schoolboy, repeating the lines aloud. The intervals might or might not have been filled by Margaret's answers. If she spoke her voice was so low that it did not reach the study.

Martin listened more attentively.

The intermittent mumbling continued perplexingly until, without any prelude of raised voices, a chair—Margaret's chair it must have been—was pushed

back so suddenly that it fell over—the rap of it on the polished boards by the door came out flat and clear. After that he heard footsteps walking up and down, and then for the first time the sound of Margaret's voice.

She was speaking quickly, a little excitedly, it seemed; sometimes she stopped for a moment in her pacing of the room, and then the sound of her voice dropped to a lower, almost inaudible pitch. Once or twice Martin thought he could pick out an isolated word or two here and there, something that sounded like, "I know," and a little later, "I'm not blind."

Martin frowned. He was utterly puzzled.

Presently the mumble began afresh, intermittently as before but this time with something more of urgency. The footsteps had ceased; either she must be standing still or she had sat down again.

Martin had pictured some moving scene, but he was lost now; all the little conjunctive sounds of response or acquiescence failed to reach him. He could not tell whether she was agreeing with or dissenting from the statements—if they were statements—of the monotonous, dull voice.

He looked at his watch and found that it was nearly one o'clock. Margaret had been up there over half an hour. He jumped to his feet suddenly as he heard the door above opened; but Margaret did not come downstairs—she went into her own room.

He fidgeted, wondering whether he should go up to Greg. The house was very quiet now. The only sound was the thud of Hester's footsteps going backward and forward through the hall as she laid the dinner.

Martin thought at dinner that Margaret looked as if she had been crying. She gave him no encouragement to talk at first and he was anxious not to appear curious. It was not until they were halfway through the meal that Margaret suddenly opened the conversation by saying:

"Well, don't you want to know what Robin told me?"

"I suppose I know," said Martin.

"Oh, that!" she said. "That was nothing! Not the facts, I mean, his trying to cut your throat and hiding the bottles."

"What else was there?" asked Martin in perplexity.

She made a little grimace and bent down over her plate.

"L-lots of things," she said with her little trick of hesitation.

Martin remembered that he had not noticed that charming stammer of hers for several days.

"Things that weren't 'facts'?" he asked.

"The things that count," she said, and then she sat up and gripped the arms of her chair. "The real great things," she went on slowly, looking straight out in front of her. "I've been so small and mean to—to you both."

"Oh, no!" Martin broke out eagerly. "You've done everything. He would never have taken any notice of me."

"He's been splendid," she said, and then she suddenly began to fumble for her handkerchief and got up and went over to the window.

Martin pushed his chair back and stared miserably at his half-empty plate. He did not know what to do or say. She relieved him of his embarrassment by coming back to the table. "I am a fool," she remarked with a smile. "Do go on with your dinner."

"I don't think I want any more," he said awkwardly.

"I won't be silly any more," she said, putting her elbows on the table and leaning her chin on her hands, "but I do want to begin again all clear from today with no more misunderstandings."

"Yes, rather," assented Martin shyly.

"Robin was so splendid, just now," she continued. "So like his old self. He does understand so well, when he likes. And, perhaps you don't realize how difficult it must have been for him to tell me all about Saturday night. It's just the one thing in the world he'd rather not speak about."

"I know," agreed Martin.

"And he was so quiet about it all," she went on, "although he hurt me terribly. He said"—her voice trembled

slightly—"he said that you had trusted him and I hadn't; that I had never trusted him. I got up and knocked my chair over when he said that; did you hear it?"

Martin nodded. The details of that scene were becoming marvelously clear now.

"And then, when I protested, he just convinced me in his quiet way that he understood all about it, and told me not to fash myself any more, now that we understood one another. He said it was all coming right and that we must try to have more confidence in one another. He made me cry; I felt that I had been so horrible."

Martin was watching her face intently, but she did not appear to see him. There had been a great deal of Robin Greg in all she had said, but little of Martin Bond. He wondered if this were to be the final *bouleversement*; if he were to end as he had begun, as the outsider, the tool that had been picked up by chance to serve some necessary purpose and was soon to become useless. He felt, in some inexplicable way, as if he had now lost touch with both Greg and Margaret.

She was, perhaps, too exalted just then to sympathize with Martin's depression; her mood was too active to be haled back by any small conflict of temperament; but beyond this there was something of a definite purpose in her mind. She had been praised and encouraged by Robin, made to feel that it was her influence which had stimulated all his endeavors, and with a natural reaction she had realized that it was to Robin and not to Martin that she owed all she had to give of encouragement and assistance. Martin had a strength and independence that made no call upon her at this moment.

"So now we are all to work together?" he asked, after a long interval of silence.

She leaned back in her chair and looked at him, half absently. "Yes, we are not nearly out of the wood yet," she said. "What he wants now is our sympathy more than anything."

"Hasn't he always had that?" he suggested.

"In a way," she agreed.

"Mine, he has, in any case," he said, with a slightly surly qualification.

"Oh, you've been wonderful," said Margaret lightly.

Martin shrugged his shoulders and looked past her out of the window. He seemed to be walking out of that fascinatingly dangerous country he had once feared to explore, into a dull, commonplace world devoid of any possible interest.

"I'm not sure that we give the Antol stuff itself all the credit it deserves," he remarked. "I doubt if we should have got as far as this without it. Mr. Greg has been extraordinarily free from the craving one would have expected. That must be due to the drug, whatever it is."

"Oh, yes, I know," Margaret admitted. "The cure has helped us marvelously. Only, the time will come when we can't depend on that any longer—in another fortnight, to be precise."

"By that time you'll be able to manage him alone," said Martin tentatively.

She looked at him quickly. "What about the book then?" she asked.

"I'm not the only secretary to be had," he said. He was trying desperately to get some word from her that would carry him through the rest of the day.

"You'll have to talk to Robin about that," she said with a smile, and Martin caught a glimpse of the chains that were forged about him.

XVIII

MARTIN was summoned to Greg's room a few mornings later and found his employer sitting up in bed wrapped in a dressing gown.

He was looking worried and anxious. He had a litter of opened letters lying on the counterpane in front of him; the envelopes, untidily burst open, had been thrown on the floor.

"I would like ye to take down a few letters, Bond," he said. "I've been leaving all this stuff until I felt better able to deal with it; and I don't know that I would have tackled it this morning if I hadn't had another letter from Andrews."

"First of all," Greg began, "write to Andrews and say that I'll not be back in the city till after Christmas." He dictated half a dozen other letters to various correspondents, and then, after some hesitation, a letter to Rotterdam, which he phrased with great care, framing each sentence with precision.

When it was done he stretched out his hand for the pad. "Here, let me have a look at it," he said, and after weighing the matter of the letter, he asked for Martin's fountain pen and began to make corrections; chuckling once or twice as at the effect of his own cleverness.

The matter of the letter, so far as Martin could understand it, had reference to the underwriting of some new company. "He'll not get too much information out of that," said Greg when he had finished, "but I think it has the look of a simple, straightforward business letter, eh?" And on receiving Martin's expression of accordant opinion, he gave a little hooting laugh.

There was, however, a curious change, now, in the quality of that laugh of his. While it was still a "hoot," and could be described in no other way, much of the malice had gone from it; the bitterness of the irony had given place to a kinder humor which, although definitely satirical, did not carry the same suggestion of insult.

"Ye write a nice clear hand," he remarked to Martin. "If ye'll just get these done," he added, "I'll sign 'em, and then I'll get up and we'll get on with the book. Och! I'm sick of business, but I'll have to get back as soon as I can. Things are in a pretty muddle. Ye can burn this litter, laddie," he concluded, pointing to various letters scattered over the bed. "They're nothing but bills, and they'll have to wait."

Martin, at his task downstairs, was conscious of a new element in the atmosphere at Garioch. Hitherto it had in some indefinable way shut him and all its other occupants away from any other life but its own. All their occupation had centered round one figure, and he, to Martin at least, had seemed to pass out of existence when he had slammed

the front door behind him. Now he was intimately presented for the first time as a moving influence in a vast world outside, a world, in startling contrast, that knew nothing of Garioch.

"It's occurred to me that we might ask Watterhouse to dinner one night this week," Greg said later. "It'll not be a bad thing for him to see me just now, I'm thinking."

"Yes, I see," agreed Martin. "Shall I write to him? Which night do you think? Isn't it rather short notice to ask him for this week?"

"Maybe, but he'll come," said Greg. "Ye had better get Maggie to write, maybe; he lives with his sister and she'll have to come, too. Make it Saturday."

Martin felt that Garioch's relations with the outer world were being rapidly extended.

XIX

THE Waterhouses, brother and sister, brought another echo of traffic from the world outside when they came on Saturday evening; and through them the self-centered Garioch learned that it was being discussed and its potentialities canvassed, that it could not remain detached much longer from the stir of life and the perplexities of government, but might at any time be called upon to render up its occupants to serve in the adventure of politics. For it was inevitably of politics that Waterhouse chiefly spoke.

The sister was a quiet, watchful little woman of forty or so, with shrewd dark eyes. She was the only one of the party who wore morning dress. Margaret, in a black gown, looked, Martin thought, an ideal of womanly beauty. He had not suspected, had never contemplated, the existence of those splendid shoulders, the outlines of which were so magnificently displayed under the thin black net that served to transform her evening gown into a demi-toilette. He regarded her with a new awe and wonder, and tried not to stare at the whiteness of her skin.

Greg, quite at his ease—although his evening dress had an air of being a little

slovenly—took up the topic introduced by Waterhouse with perfect readiness. They talked of men rather than of measures, of their capabilities, aptitudes and personal history; of men whom Martin had never heard of, yet who seemed to be all-essential for the future governing of the country.

Martin was the only one of the five who was not familiar with the details of the inner political world. Miss Waterhouse evidently knew as much as her brother, and even Margaret was able to put in a comment now and again that was listened to with attention. Martin, following the conversation with keen interest, was chiefly wondering what these discussed personalities had done in the first instance to draw attention to their talents. Some of them, it was true, had already found seats in the House of Commons, but others appeared to have no particular qualification for the careers that were, nevertheless, considered to be possible for them.

He found, presently, however, that even so untried and hitherto undistinguished a person as himself might come under discussion.

It was Greg who, with a friendly laugh, first introduced his secretary's claim to attention.

"Eh, and there's Bond'll soon be coming on, ye'll not forget," he said slyly. "He'd be a grand opponent of Socialism, I can tell ye—thanks to my tuition."

Waterhouse looked up at Martin with his slow, half-wistful gaze. "Yes, certainly," he said. "You must make Greg take you to some of his meetings, Bond, so that you can try your voice before an audience. There will be several opportunities, no doubt, at the beginning of the year."

Martin leaned forward eagerly. "I should like to immensely," he said.

"Eh, but you shall have plenty of opportunities, laddie, if ye want 'em," said Greg.

No remark had been made on Greg's abstinence from wine at the dinner table; but later in the evening, when Waterhouse was sipping a very weak whiskey and soda, he filled a pause in

the conversation by lifting his rather full, sleepy-looking eyes to a steady regard of his host, and saying:

"Don't you drink anything, now, Greg?"

"Doctor's orders," returned Greg. "I have to be careful until my hand is well again, ye know." He moved the bandaged member slightly and looked down at it with a touch of shamefacedness.

"Inflammation not quite reduced yet?" asked Waterhouse.

"It's going on well enough," Greg replied, "but I'll have to be careful a while yet."

Martin wondered why he should have put forward so pitiful an excuse, why he should not have boldly avowed that he found it better for his general health to become a total abstainer. If he were going to depend on this plea of a wounded hand now, what would he say when the hand was healed, as it would be very soon? Already he was able to write again.

But Greg undoubtedly shone that evening. His mind was more alert than that of Waterhouse; his criticisms of the younger politicians more apt and incisive.

Their guests left soon after ten o'clock. "I wish you'd let me have an article on Socialism for the paper, Greg," he said, as he was saying good-bye. "Something out of the book you are writing. I can give it a good place in the February number if you can let me have it by the New Year."

"Yes, I can very well do that," replied Greg. "It'll be the economic side ye'll want treated, I suppose."

Waterhouse nodded. "Perhaps Bond will come and discuss it on Tuesday morning," he said. "And I think I have a book or two you might review for us," he added, turning to Martin.

"Oh, thanks very much—if Mr. Greg doesn't mind," was the eager response.

"Och! I'll be glad to get rid of ye for an hour or two," laughed Greg.

When their guests had gone the three returned to the study to discuss the probable upshot of what had seemed to be an almost official visitation.

"I think it was a success," said Margaret. "I'm sure he wants you, Robin." Greg looked thoughtful. "He has not made up his mind yet," he remarked. "He'll be wanting to see me again in a month's time, ye'll find."

"He's going to take your article anyhow."

"That'll not commit him one way or the other," returned Greg. "No, he's just waiting."

"They did try hard to get something out of you," said Margaret, laughing.

Greg chuckled. "I think I gave 'em as good as I got," he said.

"Oh, better. You were splendid." Margaret moved a little, and peered down at Martin under the lamp. "What are you hiding away in a corner for?" she asked.

"I'm all right, thanks," said Martin.

Greg turned partly round in his chair and looked at him. "What did ye make of it all?" he asked.

"Not very much," said Martin. "I'm not a bit quick at taking up inferences, I'm afraid. But I rather wish that you—I mean—" He dropped his voice and stammered, suddenly afraid of the sound of what he had been about to say.

"Ye wish what?" asked Greg, moving his chair so that he could see Martin with less effort. "What is it ye mean?"

Martin looked up at Margaret to find sympathy but she did not meet his eyes. He saw that she knew what his criticism was.

"I meant," said Martin boldly, "that I wish you hadn't made that excuse about your hand when he asked you if you never drank anything now."

"Och!" was all Greg's comment. He turned his chair back and stretched his feet out to the fire. Presently he announced his intention of going to bed, said good night and left them.

After he had gone, Margaret and Martin looked at one another a little doubtfully.

"Oughtn't I—" he began.

"Oh, I wish I had your courage!" she said impulsively. "You were absolutely right, and I simply dared not say it."

She held out her hand to him, an unusual favor, but he hardly touched it before she withdrew it again. "Good night," she said quickly, and left him in a tumult of happiness and doubt.

XX

WATERHOUSE was a man with only one manner; his evasive, rather wistful detachment from life lent him the air of one who worked always for some impersonal ambition; but on the Tuesday morning he had appointed for the interview with Martin he succeeded in infusing a certain warmth and cordiality into his greeting.

"Let me find you those books first," he said; "there are a couple on Socialism that you might do for the February number, taking, perhaps, the same line as the article Greg is to send us. And then we'll go into the other room and just talk over one or two things I should like said."

The "other room" was evidently a retreat from all interruption; it contained no telephones, and its furnishing was more that of a club than an office. "We shall be quieter in here," murmured Waterhouse, as he shut the door behind them.

It took him very few minutes to outline his policy with regard to Socialism, and to define the nature of the article he expected, and then he went on:

"I dare say we shall be making certain changes in the staff next spring, Bond. I have been thinking that if you will have finished the book with Greg then, we might find a place for you here. Not only office work, of course. If you are any good on the platform by that time— It would, I believe, be an excellent opportunity for you—"

Martin's face glowed. "It would, indeed," he said. "Really, I don't know how to thank you. I—"

Waterhouse nodded kindly. "You think the book will be finished by the end of March?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, certainly," replied Martin without hesitation.

"Has Greg written much since you've been with him?"

"Yes, oh, yes, particularly this last week."

"Since he's been laid up?"

"Yes, quite. You see, his time is so much taken up when he has to be in the city all day."

"No doubt. And he doesn't feel inclined to work at night?"

"Well, you see," said Martin, hardly realizing as yet that he was being cross-examined, "for two weeks out of the three I've been with him, he hasn't been going to the city, so I hardly know. But I expect he will do a lot in the evenings, and on Sundays, of course, after Christmas." He felt that he must insist on Greg's application; that was a clear issue for him.

"It must have been a very bad cut," remarked Waterhouse.

"Yes, it was, right through the fleshy part of the hand."

"An accident in a cab, I heard," said Waterhouse, interrupting Martin's clinical demonstration.

"Yes."

"Had he been to a public dinner?" was the next question.

Martin was fully conscious of his danger now. He would have to lie, of course—and he must not let Waterhouse guess that he was lying.

"No, he had dinner at home," he said, and tried to express surprise in his tone.

Waterhouse had been watching him, but now he leaned back in his armchair and looked up at the portrait of Campbell-Bannerman that hung above the mantelpiece.

"I hear that Greg drinks," he said in his soft, low voice. "You may not have noticed it perhaps, but if you are obliged to leave him earlier than April I can always manage to find a job for you here. It would be a waste of your time, obviously, to stay with him if— I am quite frank with you, Bond, because I feel responsible for sending you there; I should not like to think—"

"I don't know who your informant is," broke in Martin with a shade too much warmth, "but he ought to be

jolly well kicked. I have been in the house for over three weeks, and I must certainly have known by this time if there was any truth in a libel like that."

"Not necessarily, you know," said Waterhouse; "it may be periodical only. However, I'm very glad to have your assurance. Greg is undoubtedly one of the most brilliant men we have. You'll come in, I hope, now and again, Bond. Four o'clock is really the best time. You might meet men here who would be useful to you."

"D'ye think he believed you?" asked Greg, when Martin later repeated the substance of his conversation with Waterhouse.

"I'm not sure—the little hairy beast!" replied Martin.

"Eh, well, I don't know that ye'd not have done better to stick to Wotterhouse," said Greg.

"I am—jolly sure," replied Martin hotly.

"So am I," agreed Margaret.

"Ye'll get no job on the *Gallery* after today's work, ye understand," said Greg.

"Oh, damn the *Gallery*!" said Martin; and looking up at Margaret to make apology, he saw that she was smiling her approval.

XXI

MARTIN's only exercise, and his only chance of fresh air during this time, was taken between three and five o'clock in the afternoon; and those determined walks of his were filled with strenuous, practical plans for a future that was not all his own, rather than with the dreams of youth.

On Christmas Eve, however, Martin was inclined for once to stay in the house. Outside a high, cold wind, and a driving sleety rain that might later change to snow, offered an uncomfortable alternative to the friendly warmth of the study.

What happened usually between three and five Martin did not know, but he fancied that Greg went to sleep. And

anticipating that lapse, he sat very still on this particular afternoon, planning to leave the room quietly in the hope of finding Margaret.

But as the usual hour for Martin's walk passed, Greg, so far from going to sleep, began to manifest signs of restlessness and discomfort. He dropped his paper once or twice and looked at Martin, who, following his own plan of action, kept his eyes on his book. At last Greg threw down his paper and yawned, evidently with intention. "Are ye not going for your walk?" he asked.

"I don't know. It's such a beastly day," said Martin.

"Oh, ye're not a Scotchman," returned Greg. "I notice that every Englishman's afraid of a drop o' rain. We'd call this a mist in the North."

"It isn't that," said Martin. "I've been out when it was wetter than this. Only I don't know that I feel much inclined to go today." He was slightly piqued by the aspersion of his nationality, and his tone was somewhat formal.

"I thought ye told me that ye felt so 'stuffy'—was that yer word?—when ye didn't get a walk in the afternoon," said Greg.

"Oh, I'll go if you want to get rid of me," said Martin.

"Och, there's no need to get huffy about it," returned Greg. "It'll make no difference to me one way or the other. Please yourself."

Martin yawned and went over to the window. He saw that Greg was in one of his fretful moods, and that the prospect before him was probably that of an afternoon spent in acrimonious discussion. He decided to go out.

He wondered, as he put on his overcoat, whether Greg had not indeed wanted to be rid of him.

A sudden suspicion shook him; he went to the door of the kitchen and knocked gently. Margaret opened the door.

"I'm just going out," said Martin in a low voice, "and somehow I had the feeling that he wanted to get rid of me. I thought perhaps I'd better tell you. I was afraid for a moment—I don't know why," he said.

Margaret's face showed an expression of perplexity and uneasiness under the light of the staircase window. "Oh, that's all right," she said. "It isn't that, but— Oh, well, perhaps I'd better go in to him." She pursed her mouth and looked doubtfully toward the study.

"I don't quite understand," said Martin.

"You will, quite soon," she said, with a grimness Martin had never seen on her face before. "I hope you'll have a good walk," she added as she left him.

There was an air of evasion and uneasiness in the room when he returned. Margaret leaned back in the corner of her chair and stared up at the mantelpiece, and even Greg wore an unaccustomed manner that had in it something shifty and propitiatory. He seemed, for once, to be ill at ease.

"Ye look fine and strong after yer walk," he said. "Are ye not glad now that ye took my advice?"

"Oh, yes, rather," agreed Martin. A spirit of doubt was already invading him.

"Did ye go far? Ye've been a long time," persisted Greg, and he continued to ask questions and to make comments on Martin's description of his walk; he might have been entertaining an influential guest.

Martin's suspicions grew. He looked uneasily at Margaret, but she would not meet his eye, and he noticed that her hands moved restlessly in her lap. Something must have happened, he thought, something odd. He wondered suddenly if they meant to turn him out of Garioch; to thank him for what he had done and tell him that his services were no longer required.

"I've something to tell ye," said Greg after a while when Margaret had gone out of the room. There was hesitation in his tone; he appeared to be brooding deeply on the matter of his communication.

"I am a lonely man, Bond," he said after a long interval.

Martin, utterly puzzled, could find no comment to make. In his heart he was thinking that his companion's loneliness had been of his own making.

"And it's likely ye'll not understand that," continued Greg after a pause, "because ye'll never have experienced the sort of loneliness I mean." He looked up for a moment with a quick inquiring glance.

"I dare say I haven't," said Martin curtly. He most certainly failed to understand.

"It's the kind of loneliness," said Greg, staring into the fire, "that drives a man to desperation. Ye've been a good friend to me, Bond, since ye've been here, and I'm grateful to ye for all ye've done, but I cannot go on unless I have someone to understand me; someone, ye see, who's known me all my life or nearly. There's only one person left, now, who can make all allowances for me. I'm speaking very openly to ye, Bond, and I hope ye'll realize from that the sort of feeling I have toward ye."

Martin mumbled some sort of appreciation. He was bewildered; he had no least idea of what was coming; and yet a terrible, shapeless foreboding oppressed him, some dread he could not recognize. He moved restlessly in his chair. "You've been very good to me," he said in a low voice. "But I don't understand—"

Greg did not respond to that. "And I hope," he went on, "that we'll make a success of this book. There'll be no difference in the house, and when I have to go back to the city next Monday, I hope to find time in the evenings." He stopped again and looked at Martin. "Ye're anxious to finish the book?" he asked.

"Yes, of course I am," said Martin.

"And this engagement'll make no difference to ye in any way?"

"Engagement?" asked Martin blankly.

"Well, I thought ye'd have guessed it," said Greg. "Of course the bill has not been passed yet, but it's quite certain that it'll go through next year, and Maggie and I can wait till then. In any case, it'll not be many months."

Martin sat quite still, trying to understand whether Greg had implied that he was going to marry Margaret. He thought that he must have made some

grotesque mistake. "Do you mean—" he began.

"Ye're not very forward with yer congratulations," replied Greg.

"Well, it's rather unexpected," said Martin. "I hadn't guessed; I hadn't even thought of it. But of course I congratulate you. I supposed you meant the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill, didn't you? I could not imagine what you were driving at." He felt cold, but curiously unhurt. He remembered the story of a man who had been mortally wounded and had never felt the pain of the blow. "I think I'll just go upstairs and change," he said. "These things are a bit wet."

Only one sentence of all that explanation remained clearly in his mind. "Maggie and I can wait till then," Greg had said. Was she, then, so eager?

Martin came to a realization of his own secret thoughts with a shock that was paralyzing. He had not known till then that the desire to be more than an humble friend to Margaret had even entered his mind.

If he had been a feeble lover he might have run away, less to save his private vanity than to avoid the pain of seeing Margaret possessed by another; but the old ideal of protective service still ruled him, a stronger influence than the ideal of his own suffering. The emotion that swayed him was one of fear and concern rather than of jealousy. A terrible doubt of Robin Greg had sprung into being; for, remembering all that story of past weakness, Martin could only, in these new conditions, question the certainty of a reform that had only lasted for three weeks.

For the moment, however, he saw no escape. He must, he thought, be content to sacrifice himself and to suffer. How hard that service was to become, he realized on that first evening of the new conditions.

Through dinner, he felt self-conscious. He found that he could not look at Margaret, and was embarrassed by the consciousness of his inability. In the study, the conversation stuttered on brokenly for a time, and then, as Greg took up a book, Martin followed his ex-

ample. From his ambush he ventured at last a brief glance at Margaret, but her face was hidden from him by the "ear" of her armchair.

He was wondering how soon he must go upstairs and leave these two alone. He hated the thought, but saw that he must accustom himself to it; and with a certain eagerness to torture himself, qualified perhaps by the wish to display his indifference to Margaret, he decided to go half an hour earlier than usual.

On this evening, however, neither sacrifice nor boast was possible, for at nine o'clock Margaret expressed her intention of going to bed. "I've a headache tonight," she pleaded in excuse.

She said good night to Greg, but he immediately got out of his chair, evidently prepared to follow her into the hall.

Martin kept his head bent over his book, but he raised it when Margaret wished him good night, and met her eyes for the first time since, long ages ago, she had looked at him that afternoon over the tea tray. And, now, as then, he failed to read the message of her expression, although he could not doubt that some message was intended. Her eyes were so earnest, so searching.

Greg closed the door behind them as he went out, but he returned to the study almost immediately. Their embrace, if any had been exchanged, must have been incredibly brief.

"Here, come up to the fire, for heaven's sake," said Greg, when he had sat down again; "it annoys me to see ye sitting out there in the cold."

"I'm not cold," said Martin, but he went over to the fire.

"Ye seem dull tonight," continued Greg.

"I'm not," Martin replied, with a pale assumption of cheerfulness. He had brought his book with him and began to read again; and Greg, after a long stare, did not further interrupt him, until at ten o'clock he remarked casually:

"Have ye forgotten that tomorrow will be Christmas Day?"

Martin looked up. "Almost," he said; "but I don't suppose it will make any difference to us."

"Och, no," said Greg; "we take little account of it in Scotland. But there'll be Biddie's presents to give her, and maybe we'll give her some sort of a treat in the afternoon."

"Oh, yes, I see," returned Martin indifferently. "Well, are you going up? I think I'll go, too. We're early to-night."

When he was in his own room, pleasantly conscious of relief from all restraint, Martin began to ponder the message of Margaret's eyes. He was glad that she should have troubled to bother about him at all; and from that he fell, for the first time, into a reflection on the possibility of other relationships between him and her. If he had been newly engaged to her, would she, he wondered, have released herself so quickly from him when he said good night? He thrilled at the thought that he could, even in imagination, hold her in his arms. But if she had deigned to give herself to one man, that man might as well have been Martin Bond as Robin Greg. . . .

The wind still shouted fiercely round the house, but above the incoherent voices of the gale Martin could hear now and again a familiar sound that seemed to have been stilled during the past two weeks—the old restless clamor of the unfastened gate had returned. For some time he stood at the window peering out into the night.

XXII

MARGARET was standing by the fire in the little dining room when Martin came down to breakfast.

"Isn't it a beautiful, bright, cold morning?" she said cheerfully. "A wet, foggy Christmas is so miserable. Don't you hate them?"

He understood that she had given him the note, if not for all their future relations, at least for this morning's conversation. There were to be no explanations. She would not justify herself. She would, in all probability, make no reference whatever to her engagement to Robin.

"Oh, yes, beastly," he said in answer to her question. He stood by the window and looked out. The sun was hardly above the horizon yet, but there had been a slight frost in the night and the air smelt sharp and fresh; and even the dullness of Demetrius Road was strangely enlivened.

As soon as he had finished breakfast Martin escaped to the study. For ten minutes he stood on the hearthrug, trying to reconcile himself to the thought of a day's occupation that would differ in no essential from the work of any other day. His picture of the day before him presented itself as something utterly flat and unendurable. He was at once too excited and too bored to face a morning with Greg, followed by all the familiar and suddenly repulsive details of the inevitable afternoon and evening. The midday dinner, the usual walk over the now well explored ground, the tea with Robin, Margaret and Bidie—there would be hymns on the harmonium, no doubt—and, worst of all, the time after supper when he would sit alone passing the dreary minutes until he must get up and leave the other two together. He decided that he simply could not face it.

He went up to his own room and put on his boots. Then he knocked at Greg's door.

A sleepy voice requested him to "Come in."

"I suppose today is a holiday of sorts," said Martin, without any preliminary greeting. The windows were close shut and the room smelt warm and stuffy.

Greg raised himself on his elbow and stared at him rather stupidly. "I thought it was Hester with my breakfast," he said. "What's the time?"

"A quarter past nine," said Martin, and added: "Would you mind if I went out today?"

"Where are you going?" asked Greg.

"I thought I'd go and see a couple of men at the Settlement," returned Martin.

Greg looked at him suspiciously. "Och! You can do as ye like," he said. "Will ye be away all day?"

"Probably."

Greg lay down again in bed and pulled the clothes up to his chin. "Eh, well," he remarked, "ye might tell Hester to hurry up with my breakfast; and Maggie's not brought me the medicine this morning, either."

"There isn't any more," replied Martin. "You had the last bottle yesterday."

The ten-mile walk across London invigorated Martin and cleared his mind. At the Settlement he found the one man he had particularly hoped to see, and the old influences of the place and his companion took hold of him. At half past six that afternoon, he was debating whether he would not leave Garioch. He had done a certain work there, and had come with some credit out of a difficult situation. Margaret was now hopeful, even confident, that the cure of Robin Greg would be a success. He might leave the rest to her; she had taken all responsibility from him by entering into an engagement that made Martin's presence in the house superfluous.

Sitting there in his friend's neat, clean room, Martin had a great revulsion of feeling against some influence of the Garioch atmosphere that overcame him when he was in the house itself. Even now he could not define it, although vaguely the thing was associated chiefly with Greg's bedroom.

"Why shouldn't I cut the whole affair?" he asked himself.

But the thought of Margaret drew him irresistibly. He knew that, whether she wished it or not, he could not leave her to fight alone; that even when she was married he must stay within call of her. He felt neither happiness nor sorrow in the knowledge; he only knew that the thing was inevitable, unavoidable.

And at once he became uneasy; fidgeting, longing to be back in Demetrius Road. He had promised his friend that he would stay to supper, and he had no excuse for so curiously changing his mind. But he did not care; all conventions of ordinary behavior seemed foolish and meaningless when weighed against the urgency of his desire to return to Margaret.

He reached Garioch at a quarter to nine, and looked inquiringly at Hester when she let him in. He had come to believe that something unusual must have happened in his absence, that Margaret had, indeed, called him.

But Hester only smiled and said, "Ye're not so late," and when he went into the study he found Greg alone.

He almost echoed Hester's greeting, adding: "Maggie has gone to bed. She has a headache."

No one had wanted him, Martin thought with a pang of disappointment; he had had no wonderful experience; he had obeyed the command of his subconscious desire, that was all.

"I'm sorry," he said conventionally.

Greg looked gloomy and depressed.

"We can finish that article for the *Gallery* tomorrow," he said after a long pause. "I was looking through it this morning and I've made a few notes of things I'd like ye to alter, but it will do very well, otherwise."

For a time they talked disconnectedly of their work. At half past nine Greg announced his intention of going to bed. Then, after a moment's hesitation, he said inconsequently: "I suppose there'd be a tonic in that medicine ye gave me?"

"Yes, there is, I know," said Martin.

"Eh, well, I fancy I've missed it today," said Greg. "Good night to ye."

His talk with Greg provided Martin with subject for polite conversation at the breakfast table next morning, a subject recognizably preferable to any account of his own day at the Settlement. Garioch seemed to insist that only its own interests should be discussed within those four walls.

"What were you doing yesterday about half past six?" he asked Margaret suddenly.

For a moment Margaret appeared unable to gather his intention, and then Martin saw the color flush from her neck to her forehead—almost deliberately, it seemed, so slow was the invasion. She looked perturbed and uncomfortable, but she did not hide her face; she stared steadily before her at

the jardinière in the center of the table.

"Why?" she asked at last.

He had no doubt of the meaning of her blush. He looked for but one explanation and found it with secret exultation. She had wanted him at that minute. Why, he did not trouble to inquire.

"I had a sort of intuition," he said, speaking quickly to cover her embarrassment. "I felt somehow when I was at the Settlement that you wanted me, I didn't know why. I thought, of course, that it was because of Mr. Greg, but he seemed quite all right when I came in. But, I wanted to tell you, he asked me if there were any tonic in the Antol cure stuff; he said he had missed it—the effects of the tonic, I suppose."

She kept her eyes away from him; the blush still burnt her; her little ears glowed red under the shadow of her hair.

"You came as quickly as you could, I suppose?" she said in a low, even voice.

"Of course," said Martin. "But I was a long time getting back; the trains weren't running properly, it being Christmas Day. I expect I could have walked it in the time. It—it was a new experience for me. I was rather disappointed when I got back. I thought—But it was quite all right, wasn't it?"

"Yes, quite," she said.

She got up quickly and went out, leaving her own breakfast almost untouched.

Martin settled down to work again that morning. He felt that he had been reinstated. Margaret could give him no confidences and he would ask for none, but she desired his presence in the house.

And he tried, with all his natural honesty, to concentrate his thought upon that one aspect of the situation. He tried to see himself always as her humble servant, willing to endure anything for her, even boldly to face—in some distant future—her marriage with Robin Greg. But, quite unconsciously, his attitude toward the ruling spirit of Garioch was undergoing a subtle change.

Martin admired Greg's cleverness, appreciated his fine qualities no less than before, but the man had become again, in some sense, the enemy; he figured so inevitably as the danger against which Margaret was to be protected. Before the end of the week he was looking forward to the time when Greg would be absent all day in the city.

Margaret made no further allusion to Martin's first experience in what he had decided was a clear case of telepathy. He would have liked immensely to discuss it with her, quite impersonally. But her manner made it quite clear that she wished to avoid any recurrence of that subject—whenever he approached it, however distantly, at breakfast, she always diverted the conversation; she seemed able to anticipate the possible introduction of that topic from the most innocent and apparently inappropriate remarks. What precisely was Margaret's feeling for Robin, Martin could not determine. At the back of his mind was a curious certainty that it was impossible she could really love him.

In that conclusion Martin was certainly upheld by his observation of their daily intercourse. Margaret was less pliant than she had been during the first three weeks of her stay in Garioch, less anxious to please the master of the house; she was, in one sense at least, apparently less afraid of him. Robin, on his side, had become more polite, more deferential. He looked at her with more tenderness, even at times with something in his eyes that was almost a supplication. In her presence he was in comparatively good spirits; he talked brilliantly at times; he made a show of being active and energetic. But when he was alone with Martin he often gave evidence of mental depression and irascibility; as a collaborator he was becoming increasingly difficult to work with. It was certain that he dreaded his return to the city.

But the thing that had most significance for Martin was the fact that Robin and Margaret were hardly ever alone together. If she was in the study when Martin returned from his afternoon

walk, Biddie was there also, and Margaret always found some excuse to leave the room before Martin at night. Robin always followed her into the hall, but their good night was never prolonged; never more than a few seconds elapsed before Martin heard her run upstairs.

The first exception to that rule was provided on the Sunday night that preceded Greg's return to the city.

They had openly discussed that return with Robin during the evening, and Margaret had urged him to take another week's rest. Martin had joined in perfunctorily, dreading that his arguments might prove too convincing.

"Surely one more week wouldn't matter," he had said, "especially so soon after Christmas."

"Och! Ye know nothing whatever about it," returned Greg impatiently. "Isn't Tuesday the New Year? And there's a devil of a lot to be done. I just have to go back, I tell ye, and it's no good talking about it."

"But, Robin, if your health depends on it," urged Margaret. "If you knock yourself out, the business will just go to smash altogether."

"It'll likely do that in any case," said Greg, with a bitter laugh and an uneasy look at Margaret, "but it's no use hawing about it; I must do what I can. If I can pull off that Dutch business, we'll be all right for a bit," he concluded.

They talked later than usual that evening, but as Martin was wondering whether on this night he ought not, exceptionally, to get up and leave them alone, Margaret anticipated him.

Robin, as usual, followed her into the hall.

That was a moment which always tested Martin's endurance. He had tried, desperately, never to picture the kiss—one kiss at least must be given and returned—and the short embrace that must be interchanged. If no intimate caress marked their parting, why did they say good night in the hall? But he had become partly inured by custom—their time together was so absurdly short—and it came as a new

shock and terror to him tonight when more than a minute passed and still he had not heard Margaret go upstairs.

He stood up and bit his lip; he was suddenly furiously impatient, and then he heard Margaret's voice say clearly, "Oh, Robin! No." There was something of fear in her tone; something, too, of disgust.

Martin clenched his hands and took a quick step toward the door. He was full of passionate rage and jealousy; prepared to face Greg, to knock him down, to do some mad, irrevocable thing. But before he reached the door he heard Margaret's footstep on the stairs; he heard, also, Greg's little hooting laugh, subdued in tone but at that moment horribly repulsive.

He came into the room the next moment and met Martin almost on the threshold.

"Och! Are ye going up, too?" asked Greg. He looked a trifle flushed and uneasy, and the glance he gave at Martin was suspicious and at the same time self-assertive.

"Yes, I am. Good night," said Martin curtly. He dared not stay alone with Greg at that moment.

XXIII

As the days passed, Martin saw less of Margaret than ever before.

For some days he made no attempt to break through her apparent reserve; but finally he began to cherish a feeling of resentment; he wanted to retaliate for her neglect of him.

But if she avoided him, she appeared no less anxious to avoid being alone with her fiancé. They still said their good night in the hall, but lately that brief *à-à-à* of theirs had been even shorter than before.

"There's just one thing, Bond," Greg said to him one evening, smiling rather self-consciously. "I know it's difficult for ye, but if ye could manage to leave me and Maggie alone rather more, I'd be grateful. I don't want ye to put yourself about in any way, but it has seemed to me at times as if ye were

almost afraid to leave the room when we've been here alone together."

"Oh, I'm sorry. I wasn't conscious of it," said Martin, blushing furiously. "Of course I will."

XXIV

"It must be very dull for you cooped up here," Margaret suggested one day.

Martin shrugged his shoulders. "It wasn't dull the first week I was here," he said.

She turned her back on him then, and looked down into the fire, resting her forehead on the mantelpiece. "That first week was so different in every way," she said in a low voice.

"May I be quite frank, Miss Hamilton?" he asked, and then, as she did not answer, he said; "I can't help feeling that you have avoided me for some reason for the last few days. I haven't really the least idea why. I did understand, of course, that we couldn't talk about Mr. Greg in the same way—about the cure and all that, I mean—after—after Christmas Eve. But I don't see why I should have been sent to Coventry. It would be quite different for me here, wouldn't it, if you could take some sort of an interest, not necessarily in me, but in the book perhaps. I don't see why we couldn't talk about that sometimes, or some other subject—that isn't barred. And if you would sing now and then, it would make a big difference, too. Do you know what I mean?"

"Very well," said Margaret quietly without moving. "I don't see any reason, either, why not."

His courage increased. "And it's not only for my sake, is it?" he asked.

She turned round and looked at him. "I don't quite understand—" she began, a little embarrassed by the directness of his gaze.

"Well, I have done something for Mr. Greg, haven't I?" he said. "And if I went away, it would, I think, make a difference to him."

"Were you thinking of going away?" She was suddenly weak and feeble.

"I shall certainly go if I have another week like this one," he said brutally, rejoicing in his advantage.

"Oh, you must not leave us now," said Margaret, and with that surrender she released herself, too late, from the control of his steady eyes. "I m-must see about lunch," she went on quickly, and she did not look up at him as he held the door open for her to go out.

When Martin sat down again to his desk he was thrilling with the joy of mastery, and even the thought of his promise to Greg did not subdue him.

Margaret's ascendancy was soon reasserted. That evening and all the next day Martin was split by his endeavor to keep unsoiled the spirit of both the signed and the unsigned treaties. He had pledged himself to Greg, and opened *pour parlers* with Margaret, against whom he was ostensibly acting; but he blindly believed that some compromise was still possible. What chiefly hindered him, he thought, was that, despite the importance of his intermediacy, he was outside the secret confidence of either party. He was, indeed, quite uncertain whether they might not at any time act together against him. He had no idea how far they trusted him—or each other.

That night, for the first time, Robin said good night to Margaret in the study and did not afterward accompany her into the hall. The kiss they exchanged would not have excited the feelings of the most jealous lover; they might have been married for twenty years.

At first Greg was not discussed between the young people; that was the forbidden topic. Their conversation took a lighter tone. They played a game with superficialities, and Martin's most earnest endeavor to strike a more serious note was invariably foiled by Margaret. If she wanted revenge she made the most of her opportunities; she rallied him on his lack of intuition, teased him in a manner slightly patronizing to his youth, a manner that gave him no encouragement to presume on his newly found intimacy. She was, he found, as distant as ever, although it was

another fence that she had set up between them. Even when she sang to him on Tuesday afternoon in the cold, deserted drawing room, she gave him no least chance to penetrate her defenses.

Martin tried to adapt himself to this persistently maintained mood of hers. He had become dimly aware that she was deliberately keeping him at a distance.

He left the study at half past eight that evening, ostensibly to write letters in the dining room. Neither of the other two spoke any word to prevent his going, but Margaret looked keenly at him when he announced his intention.

He found the dining room fire too far gone for any remedy less drastic than paper and sticks, but the room was quite warm and he settled himself down to write his letters, with the feeling of one aware that he waited for interruption.

He had come there less to fulfill his promise than to make experiment. His former implicit threat to leave Garioch unless Margaret would take more notice of him had proved partly successful. He wanted, now, both to define the cause of her fear and to renew the threat without childishly repeating it.

He had not long to wait for the first evidence of some result. Before he had been writing half an hour, he heard a distant confusion of raised voices in the study, followed by the opening and shutting of the door and the sound of Margaret's footsteps running upstairs—the door had been shut, he thought, with unnecessary vigor.

He half closed his eyes and listened, with all his attention, but perfect silence had succeeded the brief clamor. The tick of the marble clock on the mantelpiece suddenly presented itself to him as something delicately stertorous. For some minutes he sat still, moodily trying to account for Margaret's behavior, and then, failing most completely to find any solution, he returned to his interrupted correspondence.

Margaret did not go back to the study, and shortly before ten o'clock Greg came out and locked the front door. When that was done he came into the dining room.

"Have ye not finished yet?" he asked.

"Oh, just about," said Martin.

"Are ye coming back into the study?" asked Greg.

"Yes, I'll come now, if ye like," said Martin, gathering up his writing materials.

XXV

"It's just this," began Greg as soon as they were settled: "I'm not quite easy in my mind about Maggie."

"Oh!" ejaculated Martin, a little startled. "Why? What's the matter?"

"She's a wee bit nervous and upset altogether," said Greg thoughtfully. "If it weren't for this bill that ought to have been passed fifty years since, we'd get married at once and put an end to a rather difficult situation. But, ye see, that's out of the question, and we won't know till February whether the bill will be down for next session, though I've little doubt of it, myself. However, the point is that I think under the circumstances it would be better if Maggie went home to her mother in Scotland for a while—she's in a false situation here."

"Yes, of course, I see," mumbled Martin. He felt cold and sick at the thought of his probable future in that house, with Margaret in Scotland.

"Well, the trouble is that Maggie'll not hear of going away. Ye can guess her reasons. She has a great heart, has Maggie, and she thinks, with my business troubles and all that, I'll maybe get low-spirited if she's away." He paused for a moment and then looked up at Martin. "D'ye think ye could persuade her?" he asked.

"Me? No, I don't think—I'm sure I couldn't," said Martin. "She wouldn't attach the least importance to anything I could say."

"Ye underrate your influence with her, I fancy," replied Greg, returning to his earnest contemplation of the dying fire. "She's a great opinion of ye, I gather."

"Oh, really, I don't think so," remonstrated Martin, getting very red.

"I don't think she ever gives me a thought."

Greg fidgeted in his chair. "Are ye very clever, Bond, or a born fool?" he asked.

"A bit of a fool, I'm afraid," said Martin uncomfortably.

"I'm inclined to believe ye," said Greg, and hooted gently. "However," he went on quickly, "I wish ye'd try and persuade her to go home for a while. I want ye to point out that ye're fully capable of looking after me. I'll have ye up in the office with me every day—there's a table in my room ye can work at—we'll be more than David and Jonathan; I'll make a Siamese twin of ye for the time being, if that'll satisfy her."

Martin was thinking that his own satisfaction was an entirely negligible factor in this proposal. "Very well," he said quietly. "I'll see what I can do." But at that moment he was doubtful of his own sincerity. He felt that whatever happened he could not let Margaret go.

Nevertheless the contemplation of that promised talk with Margaret wore an aspect that was almost thrilling. He would be able to read her secret intention. Without any thrusting forward of his own claims to consideration, he would be able to probe her hidden desires in this matter. He could be reserved, detached; he held a brief for a third party, and he would figure as the unemotional instrument.

He had more time than he required in which to plan his attack, for Margaret put in no appearance on Friday at either breakfast or lunch. Martin began to doubt whether he would see her at all that day. He was bitterly disappointed.

So he chafed and fidgeted, and considered the possibility of sending a message by Hester. And then, when he had nearly given up hope, she came into the room, wearing a long coat and a fur toque.

"I am going out for a walk," she said. "Will you come, too? We can't talk in this house." She looked tired and rather pale.

They took the shortest road out of

the suburb—through the village that, encrusted as it was with the bright, prolific fungus of villadom, still maintained something of its original air; like an old, old woman surrounded by a crowd of uncomprehending, precocious grandchildren—and so into the lane that wound up the hill to the quiet spaces of the high common.

Until they came into the lane they walked in silence. The day was overcast and the air mild and damp, but no rain was falling.

"Did he tell you that he wants me to go to Scotland?" Margaret asked abruptly.

"Yes. Last night after you had gone to bed," said Martin.

"What did he say?"

"Oh, that he thought you were rather nervous and upset, something like that, and that you didn't want to go, and he thought it was probably because you didn't trust him—in that particular way, you know."

"Was that all?"

"Practically."

"Why did he ask *you* to tell me all this?"

"I have absolutely no idea." Martin felt that the conversation was not going as he had planned. "How did you know all about it?" he asked.

She laughed, a hard, thin little laugh that held no amusement. "Do you think I don't know Robin?" she said.

They had come up onto the common now, but there was no view from there on that heavy afternoon. London, as represented by the suburb out of which they had come, was shut out by the gloomy haze that enshrouded it.

"Which way shall we go?" asked Margaret.

"I don't care," he replied. Margaret took the road to the right, and they walked on for a few minutes without speaking.

"Well," said Martin at last, "it seems to me that we haven't discussed the important point at all yet."

"Well?" she prompted him, as he waited for her to answer this challenge.

"I mean whether you are going away

or not, and whether you can trust me now to look after Mr. Greg by myself."

"Oh, that's the important part, is it?" she asked. "It seems to me," she said, "that the important point is *why* I should go away."

"Because you're not well."

"But I am, perfectly."

"But then why—"

"Exactly," she said. "That was *my* point."

"Oh, Lord, I can't understand it at all!" groaned Martin. "Couldn't you explain it to me, some of it, anyway? Or am I too young to be trusted?"

"You certainly are very young," she said.

"Don't chaff me," he pleaded earnestly. "I simply can't bear it this afternoon."

She made a gesture of impatience. "Why *do* you want everything in black and white?" she asked. "Haven't I told you enough already? Can't you fill in the gaps for yourself?"

"I didn't know that you'd told me anything," he said. "So far as I am concerned it's *all* gap, at present."

She did not answer him at once. For a minute or two they tramped in silence along the heavy road across the common. A soft, thin rain was beginning to fall, shutting out the nearer distances. She was facing the rain as if she liked it. Her hands were tucked into the pockets of her coat; she walked as if she could never be physically tired.

"I don't get out enough," she said at last; "that's all that's the matter with me. No wonder I get nerves cooped up in *that* house. In Scotland I often walk twenty miles a day."

Martin felt that his opportunity had slipped from him. "Why don't you go out more?" he asked.

"I always go out in the morning with Biddie," she said, "and I feel that it isn't worth while, afterward, to go out again by myself."

"And I suppose you wouldn't care to come out with me in the afternoon?" he asked.

"One might as well do that as stay in the house," she said.

"Much better," he suggested.

"Oh, dear!" she said impatiently. "Do try not to be so literal."

Martin thought over her former remark, but could find no hidden meaning in it. "Must you talk in riddles?" he asked.

"What is it you want to know?" she said, turning and looking at him. "Aren't you talking in riddles, too?"

"I want to know," he said, "whether you are going back to Scotland, for one thing."

"I don't want to," she said.

"The other thing I want to know is why you—whether you— It's about this engagement. Did you, I mean—" He sighed and gave it up. "Don't you know what I mean?" he concluded in despair.

"He won't be safe for months and months yet," Margaret said, staring straight ahead of her. "And I feel—you feel it, too—that that is the one really important thing. I would do almost anything to get him quite well again. I suppose it can't mean as much to you as it does to me; it isn't possible it should. It's part of my life. I've been mixed up with it all from the beginning; I must go on. I daren't risk anything. I am going on. I'm not going away. I'm going to try not to be so squeamish and—and silly. I can't trust him alone with you; certainly not just now when he's so worried about his business. You don't know how weak he can be. He must be made happy; but if only—" She broke off with a long sigh, and then went on: "I think your suggestion is rather a good one. We'll go out for walks every afternoon. It is all clean and fresh and open up here. Shall we?"

"Yes, rather," agreed Martin warmly. He thought that he knew now all that he had wanted to know. "It's all so different away from the house," he added.

"It isn't really," she said. "We'll have to take the house with us. Hadn't we better be going back?"

The rain was coming down in earnest now, and a little wind had risen that faced them when they turned. Hardly another word passed between them until they had reached the gate of Garioch.

"We shan't be able to come out tomorrow," Martin said as he held the gate open for her.

"Nor Sunday," she added.

"No, but you'll come again on Monday?" he said as he let the gate bang behind them.

She did not reply to that.

Martin felt a shudder of disgust run through him. He realized, suddenly, that he hated Garioch.

XXVI

MARTIN did not learn directly what arguments Margaret used to dissuade Robin from his project.

Greg was late that evening—they kept dinner waiting for him—and he had no opportunity to ask Martin if his ambassadorship had been successful. But Margaret sat up that night after Martin had gone to his room, and Greg made no further reference afterward to the matter.

Whatever she had said had an effect not only upon Robin but also upon the general atmosphere of the house. The breach that had threatened to open between Robin and Martin was temporarily bridged. They were on better terms with each other and with their work than they had been during the past few days. And Greg himself was in better spirits. He chaffed both Martin and Margaret, displayed a greater optimism about his business affairs, and played hymns enthusiastically for Biddie on Sunday afternoon.

Martin responded as cheerfully as he was able to these evidences of greater serenity within the divided house. He appreciated the fact that here were all the signs of that unanimity he had once so earnestly desired, and tried to persuade himself that this agreement was all he could ever hope for, that it represented his ultimate ambition for the household.

Nevertheless, he was not content. Something within him chafed at the restraint of that weekend. He examined his mind and could, or would, find no cause for his feeling of unrest and dis-

satisfaction. By Monday morning he was quite certain that he, at least, was in no way affected by anything but lack of exercise; and he wondered how far Margaret would be able to walk that afternoon.

Their first afternoons were splendidly commonplace. They were still under the influence of the weekend; full of resolution to make their intercourse detached and impersonal. On Wednesday, however, they lapsed for a time into talk of Robin. The subject was an ever-present temptation. It continually pressed itself upon them, and other subjects were discussed with a purely surface interest. The next day they spoke of him more openly, and on Friday Margaret said that she saw no reason why they should not talk about him. His health was giving them some cause for anxiety. He looked run-down, and his appetite was not good. He stayed in bed until lunch time on Sunday.

And it was the subject of Robin's health that led them on another step when they went for their next walk. The force that was slowly to break down all their suppressions was thrusting them still inevitably forward. They could not avoid talk of Robin, and when they came to speech of his present condition, the end was already in sight. For the thing they were craving to discuss was his influence upon them, and not, as they always pretended, both to each other and themselves, their power to influence him. At last only one revelation remained to be made, the final topic toward which they had from the beginning been impelled.

They had been talking of the cure, and Margaret had led him on to self-revelation.

"I felt at that time," he said, "that his cure was the only thing that mattered. I was awfully glad and proud about it."

"You were splendid," Margaret agreed.

"Oh, and you, too," he protested.

She let that pass. "But aren't you just as glad and proud now?" she asked.

"Yes—oh, yes, of course I am," he said.

"But it isn't *quite* the same?"

"Why do you say that?"

"I feel that there's a difference."

"Well, there must be, I suppose, in some ways," he said. "He's on his own feet now—"

"Is he?" she put in quietly.

"Not altogether, perhaps," he admitted, "but relatively. We don't have to attack him, now, in the same way. At first we had to concentrate on it for all we were worth; whereas now we only have to keep the thing going."

"*You* do," said Margaret, unwisely.

"Does it mean more than that to you?" he asked.

The necessity for confidence was strong upon her that afternoon. "I think that this is the hardest part of all," she said, turning her face away from him.

When they came to the gate of Garioch Martin stopped and looked up at the familiar untidy face of it.

"Don't you hate that house?" he asked.

Margaret shuddered faintly.

"We are getting later every day. It must be after five," was all she said; but another confidence had been established.

XXVII

On Friday afternoon came the mist that altered all the conditions of that last walk before the intolerable interval of another weekend.

In London it was a dense, stifling fog, but out there on the common it was a beautiful white cloud that shut them into a little world of their own. They moved through it and yet remained always isolated in their little *enceinte* of invisibility; their dim vision of earth confined to each other, to the path at their feet and to the spectral forms of hedges and trees that grew from pale shadows to momentary solidity and faded into mist again behind them.

"We shan't get another walk until Monday," he began as they went up the lane.

"Did you tell him about our walks?" she asked.

"No. Why?"

He asked me last night what I'd been doing in the afternoon."

"What did you say?"

"I—I lied," she said. "Oh, I know I ought not to have lied," she continued eagerly, "but he's so suspicious, it makes me want to deceive him."

"I suppose he believed you?" Martin asked.

"Oh, yes, he believed me," she said.

"I told him that I had walked ten miles," was Martin's comment.

There had been no agreement between them as to hiding the fact of these walks together, and now they were faced by the knowledge that each of them had understood that this daily intercourse of theirs had been in some sense surreptitious, something that it was necessary to hide from Robin.

"Do you think we ought to stop going out together in the afternoon?" asked Martin.

"I suppose we ought," she agreed.

"I should miss it awfully," he said with a note of complete despair.

"If only he were safe—" Margaret said evasively.

"Wouldn't you?" he persisted.

"That isn't the point," she said. "We must not lose sight of what is best for Robin. Think of the horror of it all if he lapsed again after all we've done."

"Oh, I know," Martin said gloomily. "But I don't see that it need come to that. After all, it means air and exercise for you, and you want some relief from—from the atmosphere of that house. You've been looking ever so much better since you've been out more. You don't mind my saying all this, do you?"

She shook her head, but made no other reply, so he went on:

"And if we were in the house it wouldn't be any better. Am I to tell him every time I speak to you?"

She laughed softly. "Perhaps it would be better if you didn't speak to me," she suggested.

"But why?" he asked. "Why

shouldn't I go out with you? Why should he want to know about everything we do?"

He was so earnest in his perplexity that he amazed her. He appeared at that moment so strangely unsophisticated.

"Perhaps he thinks you pay me too much attention," she said quietly.

"Oh, what rot!" mumbled Martin.

"Is it?" she asked.

"In that way it is," he said. "I only want to—to do what's best for you. If you think I'd better go, I'll go."

"Oh, why can't we talk of something else?" she said passionately.

"Because we've got to make some sort of decision, I suppose," said Martin. "It seems that we can't go on as we are."

"By the way, where are we?" asked Margaret, stopping and trying to peer through the mist.

Ten yards ahead of them all sight of the world ceased. The dark, wet hedge on their right was like any other hedge; but the road before them sloped downward, and by this they knew that they must have crossed the common. The only sound in that little world of theirs in which they were so wonderfully alone was the soft occasional drip of water. And they, too, seemed to be becoming a part of the mist. On Margaret's toque, on her dark hair and on her rough coat, as on Martin's also, the mist had accumulated in tiny silver drops, that frosted them and gave them an air of belonging to the small perfect circle that ringed them in from all sight and sound of humanity.

"Does it matter?" asked Martin, answering her question. "We can always go back the way we came."

"Can we?" she asked, and looked up at him.

"If only we could be lost and never go back!" he said.

"But we can't—you know we can't," returned Margaret.

Quite suddenly Martin realized that the thing had been said; that he had declared his love to her and had not been repulsed. It came to him with a tremendous shock of amazement that

possibly she cared for him. So unmarked had been the degrees by which he had approached her confidence that he had never even regarded her as possible love or wife of his. Service had been his simple ideal, and he had so consistently kept the thought before him that none other had consciously overridden it. Now the thought broke and fled, fading away into the mist.

He stood trembling and wondering, looking down at her. "But if we could—" he stammered, a little afraid.

"You know we can't," she replied bravely.

"Yes, I know we can't," he repeated. "I know, I know, but—" He broke off and began again: "It's all so wonderful to me. I didn't understand till this moment—"

"What do you understand now?" she asked, looking past him into the white obscurity.

Their isolation gave him courage. "Perhaps I don't understand at all," he ventured. "But if things had been different, if there had been no Robin Greg to save, if you had been quite free, is it possible that you could ever have—cared for me a little?"

"Oh, Martin, we mustn't be lost!" she said.

And even after he had taken her hand and, once, reverently kissed her—the single seal that was, they agreed, to be remembered always and never repeated—they still believed that they would be able to find their way home again.

After they had turned and were following, as they thought, the path by which they had come, their future of self-sacrifice was all planned and made clear.

They walked apart through their solitude and made vows of desolation.

"We must go on as if this walk had never been," Margaret said. "We must count it as something that happened outside the world altogether."

"Only we shall know," Martin said. "The world that we are going back to can never be the same again."

"It must be," she said. "We daren't give him up now. If the only thing that will save him is my marrying him,

it must be done. You must realize that. You must face it."

He shuddered. "I know. I'll try to face it," he said.

"And he must never guess, never."

"It's frightfully hard."

"But it's the only thing we can do."

They had come to a high brick wall, coped by a prodigious bolster of ivy that sagged and dropped wet streamers over the path.

"We are lost," said Margaret, looking up. "We've never passed this wall before. I don't recognize it in the least."

"Nor I," agreed Martin. "Can't we go on being lost for a time?"

"Oh, no; we must get back." She was suddenly frightened and practical now. "We must get back before six."

"It can't be four yet," he said. "It isn't nearly dark."

"But where are we?" she urged. "It may take us hours to get back. We may be going right away from home."

"If we follow the wall, we shall probably come to a gate," he suggested. "Then we can go in and ask our way. You are not afraid, are you?" he asked, seeing the look of anxiety in her face.

"I shouldn't be if it were not that we must be home before he gets back from the city," she said, and added: "I thought you were so practical."

"I was until this afternoon," he said.

They walked on in silence until they came to tall stone gateposts supporting massive iron gates.

"I'm afraid I know where we are now," he said reluctantly. "I only came this way once and I had forgotten it. We are up a side lane, but if we keep on it will take us out into the main road and we can go down to the trams and get back that way."

XXVIII

THE heights of exaltation to which Martin had been raised that afternoon were soon succeeded by corresponding depths of depression. The influence of Garioch stood between him and any contemplation of happiness. He returned from his supreme moment to the

knowledge that he was faced with renunciation, that he must remain a subordinate figure in the drama that had involved him. That single kiss, of which his lips were still conscious, was the seal of his vow of sacrifice, and he saw that he must keep his understanding of that vow constantly before him.

"Hadn't I better clear out?" he asked her on Monday.

She shook her head weakly and he realized that she was on the verge of tears. "I knew it would come to this," she said at last. "I must try and explain everything to you. I'm ten years older than I was when I came back here," she added unexpectedly.

Martin shook his head, but did not interrupt her.

"I am," she said. "I look older and I feel older. I wonder my hair isn't white."

She paused for a moment. "Well, I wonder if I can make the whole thing clear to you," she went on, "about Robin and me—and you? Can't you understand, to begin with, that I don't—don't like Robin as—as a lover; that sometimes I hate him, loathe him?" She sat quite still, but a breath of passion crept into her voice. "Only as a lover, you know," she said. "As a man, a brother, a friend, I admire him immensely. It's just physical."

Martin leaned suddenly forward in his chair and clenched his hands. "You shan't go on with this," he said fiercely. "It isn't possible. You shan't go on."

"Be sensible," said Margaret quietly. "That's one side. Now please listen to the other. It's just a question of how far one has a duty to him, how far one ought to carry one's sacrifice. If I gave him up now, he would go back to whiskey. I know it as surely as I know anything in the world. Partly he would do it out of sheer desperation, and a little, perhaps, to revenge himself on me. And what would you and I feel like then? Do you think we could ever face life again? I don't think I could. We should have killed him. He wouldn't live long if he went back, now. Remember how splendid it all was when he first took the cure, and then think how we should feel about

it if we knew that we might have saved him and just didn't!"

"It's an awful position," murmured Martin. He clenched his hands and stared fiercely at the fire.

"He wants to go abroad for a time—with me," said Margaret.

Martin swore under his breath. "Wouldn't it be better if I went?" he asked after a long pause.

Margaret had been strong and resolute till now. She had stated the case with fine honesty, shirking not a single argument that impelled them both to renunciation. But at his suggestion her strength suddenly failed her. She leaned forward and held out her hands to him.

"Oh, Martin, don't go away!" she said. "I'm so afraid to be left alone with him."

He dropped on his knees by her chair and put his arm round her. "What else can I do?" he asked.

She leaned her head toward him until her hair was against his cheek; and he held her a little closer, thrilling in every nerve with joy at the touch of her.

"What else can I do?" he repeated, and gently kissed her hair.

"Not yet," she whispered. "You give me strength. If you went now, I couldn't stay."

She turned her head and put her cheek against his. Very reverently and tenderly he kissed her lips before he released her.

She sighed and stood up.

"This must not ever happen again," she said.

XXIX

THE weekend was an unusually trying one for Margaret. In the study on Monday she confessed that Robin had been "queer." She added: "I had an awful feeling that—that he suspected."

The week that followed was made easier for her by a recognizable change in Robin's attitude.

At first the relief was so grateful that she accepted the change almost without question. But when this change of attitude had endured for nearly a fortnight, Margaret began to suffer a new uneasi-

ness, and one Friday afternoon in February she sought help from Martin.

It was a day of high wind and driving rain, and after some little hesitation they had decided to stay in the house after lunch. This was the first time that the weather had kept them within doors, and both of them understood that wind and rain were offered as an excuse. Indeed, as soon as they were settled in the study, Martin admitted the understanding by saying:

"Has anything happened?"

"I only found out last night what has been giving Robin those headaches," she explained. "Do you know that he has been taking nearly half a pint of ammoniated quinine every day?"

"Good Lord!" was Martin's startled comment.

"It's some mad idea of keeping himself up to the mark during office hours. He has been simply poisoning himself."

"What are you going to do about it?"

"I told him that he must give that up—at once. He saw it himself. He said he would get some hypophosphates today and try that instead. But that won't be any better—" She shrugged her shoulders and made a little gesture with her hands.

"He ought to go away," said Martin.

"That isn't all," she went on, "although I think it's the worst. He's altered—"

"In what way?" Martin asked.

"He—I've never minded being alone with him these last few days."

"But you're glad of that, aren't you?"

"I was. I'm uneasy now. I'm afraid. I don't understand what is happening to him. I feel sometimes as if he had—in a way—given me up."

"He hasn't said anything?"

"No. I wish he would. He still talks as if we were engaged, but—I don't know—he has altered. He watches me in an odd way when he thinks I don't see him: a sort of grim look; a little spiteful."

"If he gives you up—" began Martin.

"If we give him up," she interrupted, "however we do it, we shall never be able to forget it. Martin, we must do our best. We mustn't let things simply

slide. I've been worrying dreadfully about it. What are we to do?"

Martin could not grasp the final issue. "As long as he keeps straight," he said, "we haven't any other responsibility. If he wants to give you up, and he can go on as he is, what could we have to blame ourselves for?"

"He won't go on as he is," said Margaret passionately. "We have got to do something—everything we can think of to help him."

"Not that," said Martin with determination.

"Why not?" she asked.

"You owe something to yourself. You have no right to ruin your own life. I don't count one way or the other," he added.

"But you do," she said.

"No, put me out of it," Martin said firmly.

"How can I?" she asked. "That's the only possible excuse I can have. If I spoil your life as well as my own—Would it spoil your life?" she persisted.

"Absolutely," said Martin.

XXX

THE question of what Margaret and Martin "ought to do" was settled for them by Robin himself. Margaret reported on Monday afternoon that, despite Martin's firm definition of her responsibilities, she had made tentative advances to Robin on Sunday night, and that she had been repulsed. "He's playing with us," she said; "I'm sure of it."

Martin would not believe that. There were warmth and light in the air that afternoon, and once out of the house his spirit had risen to meet the spring.

"We have been too shut up with the whole affair," he explained. "It's got on our nerves. We are looking for trouble the whole time."

"I wish I could think so," Margaret said.

"Perhaps, now he feels that he is able to stand on his own feet again, he doesn't want you in the same way any more."

"Is he on his feet?"

"I believe he is." Martin was suddenly confident. "I do really believe he is. And don't you see"—a most appealing theory had just presented itself to him—"that he must feel, now, that he has hardly played straight with you? Perhaps he wants to back out of the engagement and is not sure how much you care for him. That would explain all his oddness during the last fortnight, wouldn't it? Are you sure that he is not trying to give you a hint that he wants you to release him?"

"I wonder?" said Margaret thoughtfully. "Oh, it seems too good to be true," she added with emotion.

Martin took her hand in his, and for some time they walked on in happy silence.

"It is true," said Martin at last.

"It may be," she returned.

"If it *were* true," he began, "would you—"

"We must not think of that yet," she said, and gently pressed his hand.

They discussed Martin's theory several times that week; it was a theory with such comforting possibilities, and the more they examined it, the more plausible it appeared. Margaret was only waiting a favorable opportunity in order to put it to the test. They had decided that she must approach the subject to Robin, test him, give him a chance to cry off, if he wished it.

"Perhaps tomorrow or Sunday," she suggested as they sat over tea in the study on Friday afternoon. They were both a little excited. They had caught a glimpse of possible release.

Greg was without question gradually dropping back into his old ways. His eyes had come little by little to take on again a look of furtive defense, and almost imperceptibly the faint reek of stale alcohol was stealthily pervading the house. And yet they had no positive evidence. They were unable to produce one undeniable fact in proof of their suspicion.

The first week in March found them still hesitant; desperately certain, now, that all their work had gone for nought, but quite undecided how to act. Martin finally suggested that they "tackle him

on suspicion," as he said, without waiting for proof positive.

That doubtful attack was made unnecessary by Robin, himself, for that same evening he made a declaration of his independence.

He was home earlier than usual, and when Margaret came into the study before dinner, he got out of his chair and faced the other two across the hearthrug.

"I've something to say to ye," he said. He was unquestionably sober, and had perfect control of himself. Unconsciously Martin and Margaret drew a little closer together; a sudden fear beset both of them.

"It's about that 'cure' ye gave me," Robin went on; and no doubt he noted their unconscious relaxation, their faint show of relief at escape from a threatened danger, for he smiled grimly and continued: "Ye'll remember it, no doubt."

"Robin, you're not going to—" began Margaret.

"Will ye hear me out?" he said quietly. "Whatever ye have to say ye can say when I've done. And I'll not be long. It's just this: I'll not be spied upon and watched in my own hoose. Ye've been up in my room this afternoon, turning the place upside down to find evidence against me, and I'll not have it. What I do is no concern of yours. But I'll admit," he went on in a kinder tone, "that I'm owing ye some acknowledgment for having done yer best for me in the first instance. Ye have helped to give me back my self-control, which I was in some danger of losing, maybe, a while ago. I'm not ungrateful to either of ye for that. But now that I'm master o' myself again, I'll not submit to be dictated to. And if I choose to have a glass of whiskey with my dinner, I'll have it openly before ye both."

"Oh! Robin!" wailed Margaret. "You know—"

"I'll know nothing of the kind," he broke in. "The two cases are not parallel. I've learned my lesson and ye need have no fear whatever that I'll ever exceed my allowance again—none whatever. D'ye think I'm such a weak

fool that I cannot stop when I want? I've no—no craving for the drink now"—he mumbled the phrase as if he were ashamed of it—"none whatever. I just need a stimulant now and again until this damned business of mine is settled. After that I'll maybe take a long holiday, and then I'll not need a stimulant of any kind."

He paused and faced his two antagonists defiantly. Margaret had dropped her head on the writing table and covered her face with her hands, but Martin seemed half convinced, and it was to him that the next speech was addressed.

"We'll have the book finished next week, Bond?" he asked.

"Oh, yes," said Martin. "But, I say, hadn't you better try and keep off whiskey altogether? Don't you think that—"

"I'll be the best judge of what I should do," returned Greg, caustically. "Ye'll forgive me, Bond, if I'm not altogether guided by ye on moral grounds."

"So ye'll understand, both of ye," Greg continued, "that I'll take a glass of whiskey with my dinner and maybe another before I go to bed, here in yer presence. And ye'll be so good as to take my word for it that I've nothing hidden in my room upstairs, and cease yer spying upon me. If ye try that again ye'll leave the house, both of ye, and outside of it ye can do what ye damned well please. Now, then, I believe dinner will be ready."

When dinner was over Margaret said to Martin:

"Have you any letters to write tonight?"

He hesitated. "I don't know that I have," he said.

"Well, couldn't you find some?" she returned.

"No, ye needn't go, Bond," Greg interrupted, and then he turned to Margaret and continued: "It's no use at all your going on this way, Maggie. I know well enough all that ye have to say beforehand. Let's have no more

of it, woman. If ye want to stay in the hoose ye can. But I'll not be nagged by ye nor by anyone, so if ye wish to stay ye'll keep quiet."

Martin stood up. "You've no right to speak to Miss Hamilton like that," he said.

"Eh! And I'll not stand it from ye, either," returned Greg without heat. "If I have another word ye can go off together. Maybe ye would not find the prospect unendurable," he added grimly.

"Oh, please, Mr. Bond, be quiet," put in Margaret. "Robin, won't you listen to me?" she added. "I'd do anything in the world to save you from this—anything."

Martin caught his breath, and in the same instant came to a decision. If that wonderful offer were accepted he would interpose, he would declare his love for Margaret, he would carry her out of the house by force if necessary. Greg might be lost to all eternity, but before God he should not be saved by the sacrifice of Margaret. And so satisfying was this sudden crystallization of his desires, so urgent his need for some definite and final action, that it came to him as a mortifying disappointment when Greg answered that offer of utter sacrifice by saying:

"Och! Dinna blather, Maggie. Ye're overwrought. Go to your bed, girl. There's nothing at all ye can do that'll make one atom of difference to me one way or the other, except hold your tongue on occasion."

She got up slowly, and without speaking again, left the room.

XXXI

"I SUPPOSE it's all up," said Martin.

Margaret paused for some seconds before she answered him. "As far as you are concerned," she said.

"As far as both of us are concerned," he added.

"I shan't give him up, yet."

"What more can you do?" Martin asked impatiently.

"I don't know," replied Margaret hopelessly. "Go on, I suppose."

"For how long?"

"Until he kills himself, perhaps."

"But *why*?" he asked bitterly.

"Because I can't face the alternative," she said. "There's no reason why *you* should stay. In fact, I don't see very well how you *can* stay after the book's finished."

"I shall stay as long as you do," he said.

"He may turn you out," she suggested.

"Then I shall take you with me."

She smiled weakly. "Without my consent?" she asked.

"If necessary."

"It would come to that," she said.

"I'm glad," Martin said. "You've had too much responsibility all through. If he turns me out, as I dare say he will, I shall make you come, too."

During the next two weeks the two were seldom inconvenienced by Robin's presence. On more than one occasion he stayed out all night, and hardly troubled to invent an excuse for his absence when he returned. When he slept at Garioch he remained in bed until mid-day, and left the house without speaking to either Margaret or Martin.

But if they saw little of him during those two weeks the spirit of evil moved ceaselessly about the house. It seemed that Garioch never nodded now; that the master might be home at any hour of the day or night.

And when he did sleep there, the nights were full of horror. They would hear him shouting on the landing in the small hours of the morning. Once he made an effort to invade Hester's room, and the next day Martin besought Margaret always to keep her door locked.

She smiled. "I always do," she said. "I've known him nearly as bad as this before. It won't last much longer."

Margaret and Martin drew very near to each other between the disturbances of that harassing fortnight. She leaned upon him, found consolation in his strength. She was deliberately saving all her energy for the final outpouring of

vitality that would become necessary when Robin was come to the end of his bout.

There were moments, indeed, when Martin believed that she was ready to abandon that final attack; to leave Garioch and go to Scotland, where he might shortly join her, and where they might be married. They had over two hundred pounds a year between them even if Martin earned nothing, and they were prepared to face matrimony on that income.

XXXII

ON Saturday, when Greg returned in the afternoon, he went up to his own room and locked himself in.

All the next day, Sunday, they had no sight of him. And on Monday the door upstairs still remained locked. The house was in suspense.

Martin came in from a short walk in the afternoon and met Margaret in the hall. She was trembling violently.

"I've spoken to him," she said at last. "It was no good. B-but you must try." She stammered and fought to speak her words. "He's in the study now."

He watched her safely into her room; then he took off his overcoat, and after one moment of hesitation, walked boldly into the study.

Greg sat in his armchair. He was wearing a dressing gown, his hair was tousled, and he had not shaved for three days. He looked gray and tired; his head drooped; his whole attitude expressed prostration.

He did not look up when the door opened, and Martin came in and sat down without speaking. He was oppressed by a horrible sense of the futility of the things he had come there to say.

It was Greg who spoke first.

"Well," he said quietly—"will ye not begin? I'll be glad to get it by."

"You know what I've come to say," Martin said weakly.

"Ay. I know it very well," replied Greg without looking up. "Ye see, I've just heard it all from Maggie, and unless ye've agreed to play different

parts ye'll only be repeating all she's said already."

"We both want to help you," stammered Martin.

"Ay, ye're very generous," mumbled Greg.

"It isn't a matter of generosity," expostulated Martin.

"Ay, but it is," returned Greg. "Ye're surely standing in your own light, Bond. With me out of yer way, there'll be nothing to come between ye and Maggie."

"I don't know what you mean by that," said Martin. "I'm nothing to Miss Hamilton."

"Ye surprise me," said Greg, in the same dull voice. "I would have thought ye were likely to get married as soon as maybe."

"Oh, Lord, no!" Martin's denial sounded, even to himself, fatally hollow and unreal.

"Och! Then I must take yer word for it," replied Greg. "But at the same time, Bond, I must say that I think ye will be acting very dishonorably if ye do not marry her after all."

"After all what?" asked Martin, astonished and a little frightened.

Greg gave a weak shrug and made a tentative gesture with his hand. "I'd not like to be too precise in that matter," he said.

"You don't mean to imply—" began Martin warmly.

"Ye must just fit the cap yerself," Greg interrupted him calmly. "I have implied no more than ye're able to understand, it seems. If yer conscience pricks ye, maybe ye'll see proper to do the right thing by her."

For a moment the blood went to Martin's head. "Look here," he said fiercely; "if you dare to insinuate a word against Miss Hamilton, by God, I'll half kill you!"

Greg chuckled. "Ye could do no more," he said, "for I'm half dead already."

Martin could not doubt that. The man looked such a poor, feeble thing, drooping there in his deep chair. Violence was out of the question; he looked frailer than any woman.

Martin sat quite still, and neither of them spoke again for more than a minute. Then Greg heaved a long sigh and looked up with a faint start. "Ye were saying?" he asked with a look of bewilderment.

"I didn't speak," replied Martin. "But I want you to have another try, to begin all over again. Won't you have a try, old man? We'll help you."

Greg roused himself; he lifted his arms and yawned. "Och! Why will ye be starting that cant all over again? Why, for heaven's sake, don't ye go off with Maggie and leave me to myself? I'll not be wanting either of ye."

"I don't want to go off," said Martin with an assumption of firmness. "We both want to stay here and help you. The point is, will you take the cure again?"

"I will not."

"You must."

Greg shifted in his chair uncomfortably. For a moment Martin believed he was winning.

"You must," he repeated.

"Ay, laddie, I must, must I?" Greg turned suddenly and looked Martin full in the face. "And ye'll make me, will ye? Eh, but ye're a fine lad. Now, just sit ye quiet and listen to me. I'll be frank with ye. We'll have a fair talk as man to man."

"Ye've had yer say," he continued, "and now I'll have mine; and when I've finished ye'll see vairy plainly just why I'll *not* take the cure, and why ye'll make it convenient to leave my house tomorrow morning."

"Well, go on," said Martin, bracing himself. It was all over. He had done his best.

"Ye were a decent enough lad when ye first came," said Greg. "I liked ye. I thought ye were honest and straightforward; and I was pleased with the way ye tackled yer work, and yer loyalty to me in that Wotterhoose business. I flatter myself I'm a good judge of character, but it seems I was mistaken in this instance."

"Why?" asked Martin, flushed and miserable.

"Och! I found ye out. I saw ye were making love to Maggie behind my back; hiding it to me and pretending to my face that ye only had my welfare at heart, while all the time ye were trying to seduce the woman I was engaged to. Och! Hold yer tongue, will ye? I know ye'll deny it. Ye're the sort that thinks it a fine thing to pretend to uphold what ye call the honor of a woman, after ye've done all ye can to steal it away from her. If Maggie had not been what she is, a cold Scotchwoman at bottom, ye'd have fallen fast enough. 'Twas not your ideals, my lad, that saved ye.

"What I've seen, and what I'll remember, is that ye have played me false almost from the beginning. I've known this long time that ye'd not have stayed in the house to save me from trouble. Ye have stayed to protect Maggie. Ay, wasn't it that? I can see ye ken the answer. Ye'd protect her, eh? From the man she was engaged to, from the man that ye pretended was your friend and that ye wanted to save from the hell of drink! D'ye not think that that was a grand way of saving him? D'ye not know in yer heart that if ye'd gone away two months syne I'd not be where I am now? Nae doubt ye believed ye were doing the best thing for Maggie. But who made ye the judge o' that? D'ye think ye know her as well as I do, who've watched her all these years? Whisht, man, I tell ye I can read her like a book; and I know that if she'd not been dandling her silly little sentimental affection for yer strength and yer good looks and what she thought was your devotion, she'd have made me a good enough wife, and been happy with Biddie and maybe children of her own later.

"So ye see, Mr. Martin Bond, that I've little enough to thank ye for, and small reason for listening to ye when ye begin to talk about beginning it all over again. The first time I had some respect for ye both, and ye helped me. But now I've no more regard for ye than I have for a pair of silly children. So get ye gone out of my house and leave me to myself. I'll do well enough without the pair of ye. Ay, if ye'd gone

less than a month ago, I might hae managed; but ye so fretted me with yer deceptions and your posing and yer spying that I fairly had to drink to forget how I disliked ye.

"Now then, Mr. Bond, d'ye understand the position?"

It was all so specious; it wore such an aspect of undeniable truth. Martin sunk into his chair, saw all too clearly how his conduct might indeed wear just that construction which had been put upon it. One little thought alone saved him from utter loss of self-esteem; he realized that these concluding sentences wore the air of a peroration. Was the whole speech prepared, he wondered; was it the result of many weeks' cogitation?

"It isn't fair," said Martin in a low voice. "It isn't fair."

"Eh, well, fair or not, it's the truth as I see it," replied Greg. He had relapsed again into his former position, and the energy seemed to have been drained out of him. "And what's maybe more to the point is that this is my house, and I'll thank ye and Maggie to get out of it."

"But—" began Martin.

"Och! For God's sake go, boy!" snapped Greg. "I'm sick of ye."

And Martin rose deliberately from his chair and went out.

He went upstairs. Margaret's door was wide open and she was kneeling on the floor packing her trunk. She did not lift her head when Martin paused on the threshold, but said:

"I know, I know. You've done your best."

He saw that she had been crying.

"Margaret," he said, and his own voice broke, "we have not been as bad as he makes out."

She rose to her feet. "Oh, my poor old boy, what has he been saying to you?" she asked, and she came to him and put her arms round him. He cried also then, on her breast, without shame.

Presently she told him that she was going to catch the midnight train from King's Cross, and gave him her address in Scotland.

"I'll come, too," he said. "I'll go back to my boarding house for a time."

"Yes, for a time," she agreed. But neither of them cared at that moment to make any arrangements for the future.

They did not see Robin again.

Martin fetched a cab from the station, and a little after ten o'clock they left Garioch forever.

Hester had said that she would stay on.

When the luggage had been put in the cab Martin looked back at the dim face of the house, visible in the light of the tall arc lamp that stood on the opposite side of Demetrius Road.

Then, moved by a sudden impulse, he bent over the gate and pressed the latch down into the hasp.

THE END



UNDER THE SNOW

By Richard Le Gallienne

THE snow and the rain
Are falling together,
And there on my window pane
The frost makes pictures out of my sighs—
As I look for those everlasting eyes
That I shall not see again,
April or winter weather.

Yet the snowdrop whispers under the snow:
"I, too, am dwelling beneath the ground,
But in spring you shall see me blow
Like a long-lost jewel found;
And thy two bright sleeping eyes
Shall wake as they were before,
And thy long-lost face shall rise
Through the soft green graveyard floor.
There is much music under the ground,"
Said the snowdrop under the snow.



MARY—Have you a Village Improvement Society in your town?

ALICE—Yes; we've married off every bachelor in the place.



BENEATH the midnight stars, or at a suffragette lecture, man feels his insignificance.

PAS DE TROIS

By Bliss Carman and Mary Perry King

A STREET scene in spring. An ORGAN GRINDER stands playing in the shade of a tree at the edge of the Common. His music continues throughout the dance, while he himself takes the part of a Chorus.

THE ORGAN GRINDER

Now Spring is laughing down the street,
With music for her dancing feet.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo,

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo.

Who ever heard, since time began,
Of spring without the organ man?

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo,

Tel-oodle-ee, tel-oodle.

And here's that vagabond Pierrot,
A-mumming in a suit of woe,

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

Whatever can have come his way
To put him out of love today?

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

(Enter PIERROT.)

PIERROT

Ah, love alone, I ask no more!

I, Pierrot!

Though love be mad, I would adore.

A thousand years were not enough

For Pierrot,

If only I may live in love!

But if this life no love can give

To Pierrot,

A moment were too long to live.

Ah, there is none to love me now,

And say, "Pierrot, why grievest thou?"

White as the moon's enchanted fire,
Burned long ago my soul's desire.

But now all life is changed and cold.
There is no joy as once of old.

THE SMART SET

There is no hope, nor prayer nor vow,
Can save the soul of Pierrot now.

Ah, well!
Life still is life, and hearts are brave;
My Pierrot,
And I may sing a moonlit stave!

And if my heart can mended be,
(Hold, Pierrot!)
I'll sing no more in mockery.

If love be not beyond recall,
(S't, Pierrot!)
Perhaps the last is best of all.

Ah, well! Ah, well! Ah, well!
Ah, well! Ah, well! Ah, well!
Ah, well, Pierrot!

(Exit.)

THE ORGAN GRINDER

Oh, sad is love, and glad is love,
And everlasting mad is love.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .
But you must follow, if you can,
The wisdom of the organ man.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

There's nothing like the jolly town
In spring to turn you upside down,
Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .
And make you want to join the clan
That dances for the organ man.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

Here comes a saucy little pet,
The glowing gadabout, Pierrette,
Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .
As fresh as tulips in the pan.
Oh, pity the poor old organ man!
Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

(Enter PIERRETTE.)

PIERRETTE

The shops are full of gossamers,
The hats are full of flowers,
The clouds that look quite innocent
Are capable of showers.

I feel that I should like to drift
On some adventure new,
Into the green of fairyland,
Or Cupid's garden blue!

(Exit.)

THE ORGAN GRINDER

Oh, listen to the music play,
For that can take you far away!

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

You do not need a moving van,
You only need the organ man.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

For he will play, and you shall be
Transported to spring mystery.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

It is the universal plan
For moving, says the organ man.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

I dance the children up the street,
I dance the watchman on his beat,

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

I dance the traveler into town,
I dance away the angry frown,

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

I even dance the sun to shine,
When April comes—and Columbine!

(Enter COLUMBINE.)

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

That blush of roses on her tan
Betrays her to the organ man.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

COLUMBINE

The world is full of lilac now,
A smile is in the sky,
And in my heart a little bird
Is singing *B-o-y!*

What is there in the silly song
To set my cheek aglow?
Can it be love that's ailing me?
Pray, master, do you know?

(Exit.)

THE ORGAN GRINDER

It can be nothing else, my dear,
When spring is in the atmosphere.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

You know it only needs the spring
To make us all to love and sing.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

Perhaps you never heard of Pan?
He was a kind of organ man,

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

And many a lady in the spring
Encountered his philandering.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

THE SMART SET

There was no nymph about the place,
But he could pipe to his embrace.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

I often wish that I were Pan,
Instead of just an organ man.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

Reënter PIERROT, PIERRETTE and COLUMBINE from different directions, for their trio dance.

THE ORGAN GRINDER

Now here comes trouble down the street!
Two sweethearts and one lover meet.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

That never was the heavenly plan
Of peace, opines the organ man.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

First he approaches Miss Pierrette.
But she is not an angel yet.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

She will not speak to Columbine,
In whose bright eyes the teardrops shine.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

Oh, hoity-toity, what a scene!
Enter the Monster, Eyes of Green!

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

Did ever sage or harlequin
Know how to choose or how to win?

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

Alas, that ever love should be
In such confused proximity!

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

"Oh, be as wary as you can!
One at a time!" says the organ man.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

One pulls him this way, one pulls that;
While his poor heart beats rat-ta-tat.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

Either or neither, when both are so fair,
Is enough to send any man into the air.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

They all go out in different directions, leaving the ORGAN GRINDER alone.

Oh, love is a dance to a roundelay!
It may last an hour or last away.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo . . .

But how it will end, or how it began,
You never can tell, says the organ man.

Tel-oodle-oo, tel-oodle-oo—

The music is broken off abruptly as the ORGAN GRINDER moves on.

PRISON-MADE

By Freeman Tilden

Mr. Tilden calls this story an "extravalesque." Magazine readers will recall the condition he depicts, which did actually exist a few years ago to a certain degree, when one or two men confined in Western penitentiaries attracted attention to themselves and finally won pardons through their verse, which appeared in various leading magazines. Next month Mr. Tilden will satirize the loud-voiced patriot who will do anything for his country but fight.

THE Latin Quarter has been called "the Greenwich Village of Paris."

There is a considerable similarity between the two neighborhoods. In both is to be found a curious intermingling of petty shopkeeping and the arts. They are both incubators of genius—chuck full of eggs.

American tourists should see Greenwich Village first. In the quantity of artistic effort, it rises superior to its French rival. Here in this little corner of New York, stowed away between Sixth Avenue and the Hudson, is the center of the magazine industry of America. It has been estimated:

That the amount of $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ typewriter paper consumed in Greenwich Village every year, if piled up, would mount to the astonishing height of seven and one-third miles.

That the total foot-pounds of energy expended in hitting typewriter keys in Greenwich Village in a year would be sufficient to light New York, Paris, Berlin and London with electricity.

That if one day's manuscripts were withheld from the Greenwich Village post office, half the entire postal employees of New York would be thrown into idleness.

It has been said, though without much foundation, that when good Americans die they go to Paris. It can be said, with far greater conviction, that when

American manuscripts are rejected, they go back to Greenwich Village.

On Bank Street, in Greenwich Village, is a plain, red brick house, just like almost every other house on Bank Street except for the number on the door. This house was originally planned for three stories of lodging rooms and half a story of rat space at the top. It had occurred, however, to a thoughtful landlady, that the rat space at the top could be made into a habitation for poets. So it was thus arranged.

Now if you get the idea that this lodging house keeper was a flinty-hearted, shrewish, acidulous woman, you err. She was buxom, moderately blithe and generous as the sunshine. When she converted the rat space into poet space, she did it out of the goodness of her heart. She was not a rich woman; she could not afford to keep poets in her four-dollar rooms; she could, by creating a one-dollar room, afford to keep one or two poets all the year round. And she kept so amiably and justly to her purpose that, at the beginning of the year 1914, she was able truthfully to say: "I have never taken a single penny from a poet." And she was able to say (just as the Cunard Line "has never lost a passenger"): "I have never lost a manuscript."

At the beginning of the year 1914 Mrs. Alston had only one poet in her rat space. His name was Elfred Bliss

Keymore. Though but a young man, he had the largest collection of thumb-prints in Greenwich Village, each thumb-print being the mark of a manuscript reader.

The next room was occupied by Williston Haynes. Though not a poet, but a writer of special articles for the Sunday newspapers, Haynes was permitted to occupy the room next to Keymore on account of the temporary shortage of poets in the house. The two young men, Haynes and Keymore, had met at the door one night, had shared Haynes's frankfurters and rye bread, and were undying friends thereafter. They swapped reminiscences, and each discovered that the other was a college man, one from the East, the other from the West. So, with this instinct that impels college men to band themselves together in common defense against the better educated, they swore mutual allegiance over a bottle of Mrs. Alston's beer.

One rainy winter afternoon Elfred Bliss Keymore sat in his tiny room writing a poem. That he was not in the mood for composition was plain from the number of erasures and interlineations he made and from his distraught manner. Suddenly he threw down his pen, cocked his feet up on the window sill and stared gloomily out at the rain-soaked area.

There was a heavy tramping upon the staircase; the door opened and Williston Haynes came in. "Hello!" he cried as he entered. "Working?"

"I can't make it go today," replied Keymore. "What's the news? Did you—"

The other's face clouded. He threw off his overcoat and sat down on the edge of the bed. "Rotten luck!" he said. "Old Rink won't stand for it."

"He won't stand for it?" repeated Keymore, with an almost tragic look of disappointment.

"No. Turned down the idea right away. I waited around about an hour to see him. Finally he let me come in. I told him what I had in mind. I said to him: 'Mr. Rink, I know where there's a poet actually starving to death

here in New York City.' He went right into his pocket and pulled out a quarter, and handed it to me. 'Give him this,' he says."

"The fool!" exclaimed Keymore bitterly.

"Well, I said to him: 'This isn't charity, Mr. Rink. This is a bully Sunday story for the *Star*. Poet—actually starving in a garret in Greenwich Village—right in the midst of New York's luxury—cabarets—taxicabs—all that sort of thing. I can give you a page for the Magazine Section, with pictures and details of how he has been maintaining life on four cents a day.'"

Haynes paused for breath. "And he wouldn't stand for it?" repeated Keymore.

"He gave me the laugh," replied Haynes sourly. "He says: 'Young man, that's the worst chestnut in the business, except maybe "Children of European Rulers." Why, the starving poet stunt has been done to a frazzle. Now if your friend could learn a few new dance steps, and get the daughter of some Riverside Drive millionaire to tango with him on the stone bench in Herald Square, there might be a good news story in that—'"

"What a jackass!" moaned Keymore.

"Well, that settled it, anyway," continued Haynes. "I suppose old man Rink knows what he's talking about. He's the biggest Sunday editor in New York. We'll have to think of some other stunt to make your poetry sell."

Elfred Bliss Keymore looked out of the window and sighed. All at once a gleam of hope came into his eyes. He turned to his friend Haynes and asked: "Did you give him back the quarter?"

"By Jove, I didn't!" exclaimed Haynes, feeling in his trouser pocket.

Keymore became radiant. "Great!" he said, holding out his hand.

"I'll tell you what, Keymore," said Haynes after a silence; "your only chance is to go to prison."

"Explain the joke," replied the poet. "My wits are dull today."

"No joke about it," the special writer continued. "It's a scheme I had in

mind all along, but I didn't want to suggest it except as a last resort. It strikes me now as the best thing to do. There's a great market these days for poetry written in prison, by regular bona fide prison poets. You see the old idea, that poetry had to be written by a lot of refined men that live with their own families in Cambridge, Mass., and obey the laws and bring up children—that's all gone by. . . . You never tended bar, did you, Elfred?"

The poet shook his head.

"I don't suppose you ever stowed away on board a tramp steamer?"

Another negative.

"Or hoboed it through the Middle West, working your way by reciting your verses?"

"You know blamed well I haven't," replied the poet impatiently.

"Then you've got to go to prison," said Haynes decidedly. "What people want nowadays is poetry written by people you wouldn't expect to be writing poetry—roughnecks, longshoremen, jailbirds and defectives. Don't you see that gives the poetry, especially when it is good, an extra touch of interest?"

"I get you," said the poet. "I'll run out and heave a brick through the delicatessen window on the corner, and get sent up."

"Nothing of the kind!" warned Haynes. "You'd get ten days on Blackwell's Island, and have to associate with the ignorant class of criminals. There's nothing romantic about that bunch down there. They don't write poetry; they sing it. What you've got to do is get into prison, among the select criminals—the Jimmy Valentine bunch."

"But how the devil can I get into prison?" asked the poet hopelessly. "I'm no Tammany politician. And I don't want to commit any real crime. That sort of thing implies work, and I'm hanged if I'm going to work."

"I'm the last one that would suggest such a thing to you, old man."

The poet took long thought. Then he said: "Does a chap get treated pretty rough up there?"

"Not while the reformers are on the job," replied Haynes. "Why, there

was an unruly guard discharged just the other day for defending himself against a prisoner. The rule up there now is lyric suasion. You get good food and plenty of it, and the very best grand opera singers come up to entertain you."

"By Jove, it looks good, the way you tell about it," said Elfred. "Do you think I could sell my poetry from there?"

"Unless the market goes all to smash, which isn't likely, you can dispose of a raft of it. Besides that, you can get into the columns of the *Star of Bethlehem*, the prison newspaper. They don't pay for poetry, but it would come in handy, when your first volume is issued, to say: 'Reprinted, by permission of the *Star of Bethlehem*.'"

"Well, I'm game," finally assented the poet. "How am I going to get into the prison?"

"Break in," was the cheerful answer.

"Break in!" exclaimed the poet incredulously.

"Certainly. You've heard of prisoners breaking out, haven't you? How do you suppose they break out?"

"They climb over the walls, don't they? I'm not up on that sort of thing, Williston."

"They do *not* climb over the wall, Elfred. You are indeed not up on that sort of thing. They go out through the gate, having first made themselves economically invisible to the guard on duty."

"But if it's as easy as that to get out, I don't see why they don't all walk out," persisted Keymore.

"You forget," replied Haynes, in a tone of finality, "that they are having a good time there, and they are selling their poetry as fast as they can write it. To break out of prison, in these days, is a confession that one's verses are not selling well."

"I see," said the poet.

It was about half past four in the afternoon, and nearly dark, when Elfred Bliss Keymore, the unpublished poet, approached the big stone and iron gate of the prison. The gate was closed; there was nobody about. Keymore looked around for a push button, but no such modern appliance was in sight.

He tried the handle of the iron gate, and the enormous barrier swung easily inward. When the gate had clanked shut behind him, he found himself in a great court, flanked by forbidding and massive walls, thickly dotted with barred windows. There was a sign, with a pointing finger, "To Warden's Office," and he followed that.

Keymore found the door of the office without trouble, and knocked gently. A voice called, "Come in!" The poet entered, and found himself in the presence of a corpulent, good-natured man, of middle age and slightly grayed hair and mustache. The man was sitting at his desk, leaning back in a swivel chair. He held in his hand a book bound in stuffed leather, with the gilt name "Tennyson" plainly visible on the front. "Well, what do you want?" he asked.

"A cell, if you please," replied Keymore, with fast-beating heart. The whole environment was so little pleasurable to the eye that he felt like bolting.

"How did you get in here?" was the next question, put sternly.

"Walked in," replied the poet.

"Through the big gate?"

"Yes, sir."

"I'll have that guard broke," exclaimed the warden angrily. "What's to prevent the whole world from swooping in here? Why, every spavined poet in the State would be hammering at my door if they knew that big gate was unlocked."

Keymore was taken aback. In the warden's words was the intimation that the institution did not desire any more poets. This was indeed a facer. But the poet kept his presence of mind, and when the question came, "What are you doing here?" he replied: "I'm a burglar. I demand to be imprisoned!"

"A burglar!" snorted the warden. "You're a fine-looking burglar! What's that bulging out in the inside pocket of your coat? Ain't those manuscripts of poems?"

Keymore blushed at being identified so easily. He admitted his occupation.

"And didn't you bust in here to join

our Prison Poets Colony? Come, now, tell the truth!"

"Yes, I did," replied Keymore.

The warden's tone became gentler. "Well, lucky for you that you're not a newspaper reporter," he said. "I'd have had you thrown out neck and crop. There was a cheap newspaper man broke into this prison the other day, and how do you think he described me in his write-up? He called me 'the beetle-browed Cerberus'—the low-down cuss! And when I looked up Cerberus I found it was a three-headed dog. If I could catch him I'd wring his neck!"

"Have you got many—er—poets here?" asked Keymore, to change the subject.

"Have we?" was the reply, accompanied by an eye-glint of pride. "We've got more poets here—more that sell their stuff—than there are in Indianapolis. In fact, we're full up on poets. That's why I'm going to ask you to go right out the way you came in, and not to forget to close the gate tight after you."

"If I were in your place and you were in mine," said the poet, in a voice that nearly broke with disappointment, "I bet I'd give you a chance. I've never had a real square deal yet. As my friend Mr. Haynes was saying yesterday, I've never been a hobo, nor a train robber, nor a pickpocket, nor anything that would give me the inside track on poetry. I was brought up so respectably that it left its curse on me. And now I can't even break into prison."

The warden's glance softened, and just the suspicion of a tear glistened in his eye. "I'll give you a show," he said, "even if it costs me my job. I can't put you in a cell, because the cells are all reserved for lawbreakers. But I've got an extra room in my quarters, and I'll let you stay there—on one condition."

"I accept the condition without knowing what it is," shouted Keymore joyfully.

"It is a condition that will bring you no dishonor," said the warden, "and may give you some pleasure. I shan't tell you what it is just now, but I am

going to hold you to it some time in the future. Do you promise?"

"I do," said the poet briskly.

"All right." I'll have you shown to your room, and fit you out in a new suit of the regulation stripes. Tomorrow I'll introduce you to No. 93, the dean of the Prison Poets, who will show you the ropes. No. 93 is the author of the poem 'Motherhood,' in the current number of the *Parnassian*. Possibly you read it? I did. I couldn't understand it, but you can't understand much of anything that 93 writes. He's too big for us. Now, 886 has a different style; plain as the nose on your face, and yet very artistic. And 621 specializes on children's verse. The rest of them are doing well. There's only one of them I'd warn you against. Not that he isn't a good fellow, but he's got a streak of cheapness in him. He makes more money than any of the rest of them, too. I mean 554, on the north side of the prison. He writes poetry they use to advertise Van Blank's canned spaghetti. The rest of the poets sort of hold him off at arm's length. They don't like what they call his treason to the art."

"Nor would I," exclaimed Keymore. "I agree with them."

"Well, you shall see," concluded the warden. At the moment a guard came in, and Keymore was shown to his new domicile.

Keymore's room looked out into another, and interior quadrangle, dotted with barred windows like the first court he had seen. It was quite dark, and there were lights at the windows. And in very many of the cells he could make out the figure of an inmate, fountain pen in hand, writing.

In the following several days Keymore had an opportunity to observe that he was associated with successful poets. In Greenwich Village the mails had gone out heavy and come back the heavier for one small slip of paper; here the mails went out heavy and came back joyously light. Yet, withal, there was a fine atmosphere of ethical artistry; no loud talk of money (as sometimes was the case back in Greenwich Village) or scrambling for the laurel. With the

exception of 554, the versifier of canned spaghetti, they were far from worldly. Yet—they laid by their money thriftily.

The principal danger that always threatened the Prison Poets was that of being pardoned out. Thousands of well-meaning readers, all over the world, were constantly circulating petitions and addressing them to the President, the Governor of the State and other notables, to the end of breaking the chains of a Prison Poet. Much against their wills, several poets had already been pardoned; whereupon the public soon lost interest in their work.

Keymore's heart often sank as he heard the conversation of the Prison Poets. They had been everywhere, seen everything. There was scarcely one that had not been around the world; some had fought in the Foreign Legion, some had occupied cells in Siberian prisons, others were perfect in the argot of tramps.

Keymore had his share of self-assurance, but he also had insight enough to see that he was outclassed. He regretted the nights he had slept in unadventurous beds instead of under haystacks or on the snow; but he knew, too, that regrets were unavailing. The thing to do was to study the method of the successful. In this determination he was assisted by the complaisance of 93, the dean of the incarcerated poets. This prisoner, a middle-aged man who had originally been sentenced for swindling, and who had some mysterious political influence that enabled him to stay in prison after his term had expired, showed a fancy toward the unpublished newcomer, and gave him valuable assistance. Among other things, he gave Keymore the true note of prison poetry. He showed him how it must not touch the minor chords too often; how it must avoid much complaining, bewailing of his lot; how it should rather be big, burly, heaven-calling, with even a suspicion of defiance of the power of man. Such poetry as would be calculated to impress the average magazine reader sufficiently to make him say: "By George, that man ought never to be doing time!"

Keymore profited so much by the kindly advice of his guide that at the end of the third week he received a cheque, with the following letter:

DEAR SIR:

We are glad to be able to tell you that we are keeping your touching verses, "The Sparrow on the Wall" for publication in the *Peculiar Magazine*. It is the consensus of opinion that this is one of the finest poems that has been turned out of your present abode. You may be interested to know that the stenographer to the president of the corporation broke down and wept while copying the verses. Let us see some more of your work as soon as possible.

Yours very truly,

THE EDITORS.

P. S. You might send us a short sketch of your life and a photograph. It would be well to have this photo taken in your present clothing, if you have no objection. If you cannot do this, then a photo taken under some thrilling circumstances—in Central Africa, the Philippines, shooting rapids or the like.

Keymore, delighted, showed the letter to 93, his mentor. The pleasure of 93 was unaffected and warm. He grasped Keymore's hand and shook it. "You're on the right track now, youngster," he cried. "You've your future in your own hands. Remember never to be too—er—weepy. Be strong, and captain-of-my-soul-like. That gets them—to use the vernacular."

"I owe it all to you," cried Keymore, in a rush of gratitude.

"Never mind that a bit," was the generous reply. "All I ask is that you help some other young fellow when the time comes. Why, there was a time when my verses were rejected by the *Springfield Republican*."

"It doesn't seem possible!" murmured Keymore.

The next two weeks were the happiest that Keymore had ever known. He felt, for the first time, the thrill that goes with writing something that stands an even chance of getting accepted. It was a period of great prosperity in the prison. The magazines were buying heavily. One of the cooks caught the spirit of success, scribbled off some verses, and sold them to the *Baker's and Confectioner's Guide*. Nobody had the slightest fear of a reaction from this prosperity. But there was a reaction,

and it came about in an unexpected manner.

One afternoon, about the same hour that Elfred Bliss Keymore had broken into the prison, another man broke in. It was noised about that he had some sort of hold on the warden, for though he was not a poet, he was permitted to remain. In appearance he was not prepossessing. He was about twenty-eight years old. His face was pitted deeply, and he had red hair and reddish eyelashes. He spoke very little at first, but when he spoke at all it was in a commanding tone, as though, young as he was, he had been accustomed to be obeyed.

For some reason this newcomer, whose name was Bopp, singled out Keymore as the principal poet of the group. Perhaps this was because Elfred's success was the most recent, and showed most plainly in his manner.

It was plain that Bopp was in the prison as a matter of business. He watched the poets furtively, even eavesdropped when they were speaking together. Finally, one day, he approached Keymore and asked for a few minutes' conversation.

"Do you believe in unions?" he asked abruptly.

"What kind of unions?" was the innocent answer.

"Trade."

"Yes," was the unhesitating reply.

Bopp drew a long breath. He had evidently not been expecting this answer. There was a pause, and then he said: "Then why don't you fellers organize?"

"What fellows?"

"You poets."

Keymore was astounded. "Why," he replied, "we're not in trade."

"You get money, don't you?"

"Yes."

"You get it for doing something, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, ain't that trade?"

"Indeed it is not," replied Keymore proudly. "It is art."

"Art be hanged!" said Bopp. "You fellers have had this open shop graft long enough. I don't mind telling you

"I'm a walking delegate for the new-formed Poets' Union, and I've come up here to form a chapel among you fellers. The less kicking the better. You tell your friends that."

"But you are not a poet?" asked Keymore.

"I should say not," was the reply. "Let me do the walking and I don't care who writes the country's poetry. That's my motto."

"But I tell you right now," said Keymore, "you won't do any business here. Not being a poet yourself, you don't see things as we do."

"I've got grand good eyesight," returned Bopp, "and I can see a whole lot. Now you tell the fellers what I told you, and have a committee to confer with me. That's all."

Insolent as Bopp's manner was, Elfred could not fail to be impressed by its authoritativeness. He lost no time in communicating the message to 93. To his surprise, 93 did not wax indignant, or seem to be outraged. He asked, simply: "Does this man Bopp seem to be pretty sure of his power?"

Keymore replied in the affirmative.

"Well, it may be," went on 93, "that something could be arranged along that line. We'll call a meeting and take a vote on it."

Not a word about the immaculateness of art; not a sign of uprising against the ethics of poetry! Keymore was amazed. But he had faith in 93, and was willing to follow him blindly.

Several other poets with whom Keymore spoke that day took the same urbane view of the situation. They were willing to be convinced of the advisability of unionizing. A meeting was called, with the permission of the warden, for the following day.

This meeting was an affair calculated to impress the outside world, if the outside world could have been present. Seated in the dining hall was the cream of the country's incarcerated talent, representing all verse forms and aspirations from epic to rondel. Keymore's heart throbbed with the pleasure of being one of them.

No. 93 introduced the subject for

discussion with graceful clearness, and asked for opinion from the floor. Immediately there were replies. There was no great desire manifested for the scheme; on the other hand, the general opinion was that if unionization were necessary to insure a continuation of prosperity, it should be done as soon as possible. The chairman, 93, nodded approbation.

Suddenly 554, the poet of canned spaghetti, jumped to his feet. He was flushed and angry, and spoke with impetuous eloquence. "Are you going to forsake the principles of art for the sake of a few miserable dollars?" he cried. "Did Homer belong to a union, or Shakespeare, or Dante? Did Keats pay dues? Would Tennyson have come at the beck and call of a walking delegate? Shame on you! If you surrender at this first assault of commercialism, you are not fit to be in prison."

There was more and even bitterer speech from 554. The rest of the poets sat silent under the scathing denunciation; but the words of the speaker found a mark, for when the vote was taken it was unanimous in rejection of the union idea.

"But what do you think they will do to us?" asked a number of poets of 554, who had now assumed leadership.

"What *can* they do?" he sneered. "We've got our public."

But the true answer to the question "What will they do to us?" came only too soon. On the third day following the meeting, 93 received a bulky envelope in the morning mail. At first he thought it was mail from his clipping bureau; he could not imagine, at this stage in his career, the rejection of a manuscript. Yet that was what the envelope contained—rejected poems. And with them came the following letter:

DEAR SIR:

We are returning your recent offering with great regret. If we responded to our desires, we should be only too happy to accept these poems; but we are obliged to say that, owing to outside pressure upon us, this will be impossible—not only now, but in the future. We may as well tell you that a complaint has been made against our acceptance of prison made articles of any kind, as being in unfair competition with the union-

made goods. We do not undertake to decide the merits of this question. Business reasons constrain us to accept conditions as they are.

With great regret and kindest wishes,

Yours very truly,

THE EDITORS.

In the next two days the prison mail was glutted with rejected poems, coming from practically all the important magazines in the country.

The prison was in an uproar. Dreamy and philosophical and unworldly as poets are, they have one sentiment in common with everybody else in the world: they hate to lose a good thing. A committee was appointed to wait upon the warden and have him arbitrate the dispute with the powerful union forces outside.

"Gentlemen," said the warden, with great feeling, "I'm sorry to have to tell you that the game is up. That fellow Bopp didn't come here to unionize the prison poets. They wouldn't let you join the union if you wanted to. He was here merely to find out what he could about your business. There's a great wave of feeling against prison-made goods just now. We can't sell any of our brooms and brushes except at a price below the cost of manufacture. So you see how it stands. Speaking for myself, I'm mighty sorry about this.

I'm never so happy as when I am surrounded by poets. And now, I suppose, the prison is going to be filled up with lowbrows that never amounted to anything and never will!"

As the poets were leaving the warden's office, the warden reached out a detaining hand to Keymore.

"Pretty tough, eh?" he said.

Keymore nodded. "Just my luck. I no sooner break into the prison than the whole business goes up in smoke."

"I'd like to have you hang around here a few days," said the warden.

"What's the use?"

"Why, it wouldn't be any use to you. But perhaps you recall that I let you come here on one condition, and you promised to fulfill that condition."

"Right you are," replied Keymore.

"I'll do it. What is it?"

The warden reached up to the shelf above his head and took down a large portfolio. It was brimful of large sheets of paper, probably not less than a ream.

"I've been writing a little poetry myself, in the last two or three years," said the warden. "I want you to criticize my work. One of these is the longest poem ever written in this prison, if I do say it myself. It's twelve cantos and—*hanged if the boy ain't fainted away!*"



"DID he decide to marry her?"

"Yes; but she reversed his decision."



EXPERIENCE—An overrated article, for which it is customary to pay too high a price.



THE discreet man who burns the compromising letter amply attests to the wisdom of fighting the devil with fire.

FORTY POUNDS OF GOLD

By George Catton

The dog, we say, is man's most faithful friend: he will remain true to his master when everyone else has deserted him. Here is a story of a man who stuck by his dog, and was willing to gamble with his own life rather than sacrifice his dumb companion. Humanitarians will get a shock at the conclusion of this story.

"CLOSE the door!"

The authoritative command, pitched high, and rank with genuine fear, swept across the corridor from the elevator shaft and came in through the keyhole of my door. I raised my head to listen.

"Close the door!" The hoarse voice rose to a shriek in the repeated command, a nerve-racking scream of terror like the last vocal protest of a degenerate before the trap is sprung that drops him into eternity! I held my breath, waiting—waiting!

The gruff tones of Carl, the elevator man, broke the terrible silence. "Wait a minute, mister—" he began, his voice cool, calm, expostulating. Then it was suddenly stilled, as though a hand had been clapped across his mouth; a short, sharp scuffle followed, the elevator gate slammed shut and, springing to my feet, I jerked open the door.

The elevator had started up, and the floor above hid the faces of the occupants of the car—Carl and another, much taller, man. Carl was jammed into a corner, the other man's right hand fast in his shirt front, his left hand clutching at the lever that controlled the car. That much I saw at a glance; then the car passed up beyond the floor above.

What had happened? My first thought was that Carl had been arrested, but I dismissed it when I remembered

that it had been the other man's voice I had heard with the fear behind it. I glanced down the hall. It was deserted. I turned my head and looked up the stairway.

She was coming down the steps, her black hood but half hiding her short yellow curls, her fox muff swinging from her wrist, singing "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine." At her heels a large light-haired dog dodged from side to side, trying vainly to catch the elusive fur. Just a little slip of a maid she was, hardly out of school. Surely no man would be afraid of her! Yet there was no one else in the hall. There had been no one else in the corridor at the time, for my door was the last one down and the next was fifty feet away. I paced the distance to make sure. If there had been anyone there I should have seen him when I opened my door; he couldn't possibly have got away. Yet the owner of that voice had been hysterically afraid of something. What was it?

I walked across to the elevator shaft and rang the bell, noticing as I did so that the car started immediately downward. I stepped in when Carl opened the gate.

"What was wrong with that man you just took up?" I asked, assuming an indifferent air and motioning with my hand that I wished to go down. He held up a five-dollar gold piece and shook his head. I could get no in-

formation there. You can do anything with Carl if you can afford it and know how to offer your remuneration.

I questioned the clerk. He hadn't heard anything of or about it. Dinner passed, and though I searched among the guests, trying to locate the man by his clothes, for I hadn't seen his face, I was as much in the dark as ever. No one but myself seemed to have even heard about it; even the little girl shook her head when I asked her if she had heard any unusual noise when she was coming downstairs. Every turn I made, every question I asked, only deepened the mystery.

Now when an incident like that occurs in a hotel like the Gibson, with upward of three hundred guests daily on the register, one would naturally expect that the house detective would be among the first to hear about it. I decided I'd ask him. I had other reasons, too, for going to him.

The Gibson house detective and I have been friends, good friends, for three years. Like Doctor Watson, I go along with my friend the detective as an assistant and often try to discover his methods. Of late there has sprung up a sort of rivalry between us. I don't claim to possess any ability in the detection of crime—I leave that to him—but I do try to "beat him to it" as he puts it. For a year I have been trying to catch him ignorant of something that has occurred in the house, and as I knocked on his door I couldn't refrain from smiling. I was the only one in the building who had heard of or knew about the voice in the elevator—I was certain of that.

He was reading when I went in, and I imagined from his smile that he had been expecting me. But he didn't say anything till I had filled my pipe and lighted it; then he raised his eyes from his book and regarded me with an amused expression upon his face.

"Well," he asked, "what's the joke?"

I lit another match and slowly, tantalizingly, applied it to my pipe. I had waited and worked a long while to get ahead of him, and now that I had succeeded I was in no hurry. "What

are you reading?" I questioned. "Robert Service's poems?"

He frowned and looked across at me fixedly for a moment. "No," he replied shortly, raising his book to examine the title. "This is entitled, 'The Mystery of the Elevator—or What Was He Afraid Of?'"

My pipe went out. I didn't have enough ambition left to pull on it. He knew all about it then; and I had imagined I alone had heard it! Maybe Carl had told him. After I had succeeded in swallowing my chagrin, and when his smile came back, I asked him.

"No," he replied, "I didn't need to ask anyone. I am personally acquainted with the man himself. He lives in the house here, and has a suite of rooms on this floor. I can't tell you anything more definite than that; he doesn't want his peculiarity generally known!"

"But what was he afraid of?" I demanded. "There wasn't a soul in the hall but a little girl."

"Sure?"

"Certainly!" I snapped; I hadn't quite got over my disappointment. "There wasn't a sign of anything in sight but the girl and her dog."

"Ah, a dog!" He laid down his book and lighted his pipe. "That's what he is afraid of—a dog."

"A dog?"

"H'm, a dog," he replied. "Not every breed of dogs, nor yet any particular, individual dog, but just a Scotch collie. He will cross the street a dozen times a day so as not to have to pass one. Many a time I have taken him to task about it."

"I don't mind a French poodle," he will say. 'I don't worry about bloodhounds or water spaniels or rat terriers, but a Scotch collie gets my subconscious goat!'"

"His subconscious goat!" It was a new term to me, and I repeated it unconsciously aloud.

My friend smiled. "That's what he calls it. You see, he is a baseball fan, and has got into the habit of using slang words and phrases. 'Goat' is a slang term for nerve."

"But his subconscious nerve," I asked—"what does he mean by that?"

"Just what he says. He is not actually afraid of a Scotch collie. In fact, he is not afraid of anything. But when he passes one of those dogs, or even gets in close proximity to one, though he may not know of its presence, there's something inside, as he puts it, that gets to shaking; something that wants to turn and run; his 'subconscious goat.'"

"And the reason for it?" I inquired. "Was he ever bitten by a Scotch collie?"

"Yes, that's the reason," he answered. "And he carries some nasty scars as a memento of it. But though he was a grown man at the time, he cannot remember when he was bitten; he didn't know at the time that he was on the verge of becoming a meal for a dog."

"Can you tell me about it? Does your promise to him forbid you to go any further—with me?"

He studied my face seriously for a moment.

"No," he replied slowly; "I will tell you about it. But it's a long story and I'm thirsty." He rose and mixed two of his favorite drinks. "Cocktails," he calls them, but he is the first man I ever saw that puts Irish sloe gin and absinthe into the same cocktail. And while he worked I watched him, trying for the thousandth time to see past the many wrinkles in his face. I failed.

He is a peculiar man, my friend the detective; mentally and physically odd. You cannot describe him in feet and inches, colors and contour, and but poorly by comparison. The best I can do is to ask you to imagine a man with a face like Lincoln's, a body at least four inches longer than that great President's and a chest measurement of fifty and a half inches. He's broad and thick out of proportion. He gets his shoes made to order through necessity. Mentally his head controls his physical deformity perfectly. Morally—we'll consider that later on.

He's a Westerner, from Washington. Bones and brains and bloody red meat. He wears a collar at least an inch and a half higher than any fop's I ever saw; an absurdly high collar, and smokes

an eternal pipe; yet I've seen him lay violent hands on two men in the bar-room downstairs and alone and unaided take them both two blocks to the station.

He came well recommended. I know for a fact that the proprietor, an old prospector, had accepted his application chiefly because he recognized the ability in a man who had kept the pick of the Northwest Mounted Police hunting him for two years along the Arctic Circle, only to put up such an intelligent defense when they did get him back to civilization for trial, for the murder of his partner, that the jury, all Western men, acquitted him without retiring. But he lost the claim he had staked. As I watched his face I wondered if at any time he had known the proprietor in Alaska.

He resumed his seat and took a sip from his long glass. "It was in 1898, as near as I can remember, when"—he paused and took another swallow—"when Paul Chisholm went to the Yukon and started for the gold fields with a big Swede for a partner and a Scotch collie he had raised from a pup for a companion. A woman acquaintance gave him the pup, so naturally he was very fond of the dog. Also, when you've eaten and slept and lived with such an intelligent animal as a dog for three years in the roughest spots on the earth, you are very likely to become much attached to it. Paul thought a lot of that Scotch collie. He'd have missed it if it hadn't been close by somewhere all the time. The Swede kicked on the dog.

"For why," he asked, "we tak that tam dog? For this country he is not a good breed—he eat so much like a man!"

"Paul looked up at the Swede. He was packing the grub at the time. Then he called the dog and petted him for a moment. If he had to choose, he'd prefer the dog, for he knew the dog. But he didn't want to lose the Swede. There wasn't a native Indian who knew Alaska as the Swede knew it; he had taken no less than four large fortunes into Dawson and left them, mostly,

with sundry bartenders and professional gamblers. Paul smiled knowingly.

"He's food on the hoof, Curly," he replied quietly. "We don't have to carry him." And the Swede let it go at that.

"They left Dawson in June, crossed the line and struck into the Tanana Hills. There were hundreds of prospectors, of all sizes and in all conditions of health, who left Dawson that spring. In pairs and singly, in parties of threes and fours and occasionally more, they faced north or west with visions of untold wealth before them and often very little behind them in the shape of food; then when the snow began to blot out the rugged landscape they drifted back. A half-dozen all told mushed in, straining under a poke as big as an Indian chief's headdress. Some crawled back on their hands and knees in the snow, with frozen feet and only a hazy idea of the location of the claim they had staked. A few are out there yet! Every now and again a round white skull floats down the rivers on the spring floods, or they find a human femur sticking up out of the earth, pointing up, or down, as you like to imagine, to the present abode of some cheechako. The big Swede's framework is kicking around up there yet, and he was a real old sourdough. Paul came back to register one of the richest strikes ever made in that God-forsaken hole and dodge Scotch colliers all the rest of his natural life."

The detective stopped abruptly and turned his head to listen. Out in the hall light footsteps hesitated at the door, then continued down the corridor. The detective smiled.

"It was the middle of August," he continued, "before they even imagined they saw the glint of color. Then the dog uncovered it!"

He paused again and refilled his pipe, his head sideways listening.

"They were having dinner at the time," he went on, "and had built a fire on the bank of a stream that roared down from the hills and emptied into Birch Creek, seventy miles to the north. The dog, excited and playful in antici-

pation of the food he knew he would soon get, raced around and dug holes. Suddenly the Swede's jaw quit working, and springing to his feet he ran across to the dog. For a moment he stood looking down into the hole the dog was pawing out in the sand; then he dropped to his knees and began to pet the dog.

"The tam dog—the tam dog—the tam dog!" he muttered singingly, rocking himself sideways and scooping up the sand with his other hand. Then he looked up at Paul.

"The tam dog!" he yelled excitedly. "The tam dog he find—look!" The Swede was right!

"A few inches below the surface a broad outcropping of rotten rock, blotched and seamed and splashed with gold, ran down from the hills, crossed the valley and dove straight down in the middle of the creek. Centuries of spring floods had washed the hill sands down upon it and completely hidden it. They would have walked over it in their downward journey if the dog hadn't dug!

"By night they had staked the claim. In two weeks they had cleaned up enough out of the bed sands of the creek to give each man a load of forty pounds apiece. Forty pounds of, not dust, but broad, flat 'pumpkin seed' that wouldn't carry thirty pounds of dirt to the ton. Then they started back. They had just three hundred miles to go!"

Once again the detective paused to listen, and I imagined he was expecting someone. But I didn't speak.

"They had three hundred miles to go," he repeated, "and as they figured on making at least twenty miles a day, they packed enough of the remainder of the grub to last two weeks, caching the rest for use in the spring when they returned. But they didn't figure on Providence, and Providence has to be the chief consideration in Alaska. For instance: you can foretell the weather in any part of the world and come within some reasonable distance of the truth, but the oldest native in Alaska only shakes his head when you ask him of tomorrow. The Swede should have

known better than to have shortened their food supply when winter was so near, but to carry more food meant to leave some of the gold, and the Swede had been figuring on a blowout at Juneau that winter. Paul, too, had plans for the cold winter. They made half of the return journey before Providence interfered.

"The Swede slipped on a pebble and rolled down hill. When he got up he sat down again. His leg was broken!"

"Paul set it. Once, in Arizona, he had set his own arm just because the nearest doctor happened to be forty miles away. Paul threw up a rough shack and sat down to wait till the Swede should be able to travel again. By that time there was a foot of snow on the ground. Several times, when it began to freeze up at sundown, Paul suggested going back for the food they had cached, or to go on to Dawson for help, but the Swede wouldn't listen. 'He didn't care to be left alone,' he said, but Paul knew otherwise. Paul knew the Swede didn't trust him, that the Swede thought he wouldn't come back. Even when he offered to leave the dog with him, the Swede said no, though he knew well that Paul wouldn't be parted from the dog. The result was that when the Swede hobbled out of the shack on the crutches Paul had whittled out for him, they had just grub enough for four days for all, or six days for the men and nothing for the dog, as the Swede suggested. But the dog got his share just the same.

"Just how much we have got?' the Swede asked. Paul told him.

"Four days!' the Swede repeated questioningly. 'Four days' food and—the dog?'

"Paul looked across at him for a moment. 'Maybe,' he replied. That night, when the Swede slept, he cleaned his gun.

"Next morning the Swede's leg was swollen to an alarming size and he couldn't move it, so when they finally did get started they carried their last mouthful inside. The Swede carried his crutches; Paul toted half the gold.

"They made forty-one miles in four days; then the Swede broke loose.

"Were you ever hungry?' My friend the detective turned to me with the question. "I don't mean just to miss a few meals—everybody does that at times—but did you ever have to go for days without even seeing a morsel of anything that could be converted into food? Were you ever forced to keep on your feet with a dull, dead ache in the pit of your stomach, feeling as though you'd swallowed a balloon?"

I confessed that my rather varied experience didn't include such dire straits.

"Neither had Paul," he went on. "Yet it was the Swede, who had nearly starved to death twice by his own telling, who cast longing eyes at the dog. He was trying to smoke at the time, and gagging over it, when he took his pipe out of his mouth and pointed across the fire at the dog.

"Tonight we eat?' he questioned gruffly. Paul studied the curly coat of his canine friend for a moment.

"No,' he replied evenly. 'Not yet.'

"The Swede leaned over and carelessly knocked out his pipe on the end of a burning stick. When he straightened up he had deftly replaced the pipe in his hand with the pistol that had hung at his hip.

"Tonight,' he rasped, 'we eat!'

"Paul looked across at the yawning hole in the muzzle of the weapon. 'That's right,' he answered quietly, 'we do!'

"The Swede was taken aback. He knew quite well the love Paul had for the dog. He knew the man's nerve. He had expected trouble and it hadn't come; maybe that was why he didn't take ordinary precaution. Paul held out his hand to the dog.

"Here, Jamie!' he called quietly, slapping his leg encouragingly. 'Here, Jamie, come here!'

"The dog got up slowly and started toward the fire. He was getting as weak as the men. Paul called again, accompanying each call with a slap on his leg and watching the Swede the while out of the corner of his eye. The Swede

licked his lips and turned his eyes to the dog.

"Paul's hand, half raised above his leg, jerked suddenly straight upward, his body lurched sideways into the snow, the Swede's gun roared across the fire and a bullet whistled through where Paul's body had just been. Then came the answer, Paul's answer! The Swede never pulled trigger again!"

The detective refilled his long glass and left it untouched at his elbow. "After that Paul slept," he continued. "For five hours he slept the sleep of utter exhaustion; then he started on again, leaving the Swede's body where it lay. He was too weak to bury it; he was too weakly indifferent even to drive the dog away from the blood-stained snow across the fire. With his face to the east, and the low hills on the left as a guide, he dragged his heavy feet through the clinging snow for two days without a minute's rest; afraid, if he stopped, he would be unable to start again. A dozen times during those forty-eight hours he looked up to search ahead for the dog, and each time he half drew his revolver, only to push it back again and leer hideously when he tried to smile. The dog had been his companion for years, had been his only friend through scores of hardships; he had killed a man to save its life—he just couldn't kill him now even to save his own life. And the dog—every little while Jamie would come back in his trail and look up into the man's face with his bloodshot eyes and whine low, as if asking when it all would end.

"They had fifty miles to go when the man went down, pitched forward in the snow through sheer failure of muscle and lay there without moving. Physically he was all but gone; one thought only would stay in his head: Keep moving! If he kept on in the direction he was going he'd live! Half dead as he was, he didn't want to die. No one gets so near to death as really to welcome it. He knew he was down, and even had a faint idea of the distance yet to go; he knew if he killed the dog and ate it he'd win out with days to spare. But the dog? No! He couldn't kill Jamie!

"After a while his mental horizon cleared a little. He got upon his knees and started on again. Hand over hand in the dog's trail he crawled, his dragging legs leaving a faint stain on the snow where it wore his trousers away. All day he crawled with the lagging dog just a little ahead; hour after hour, till the day—a day that had dwindled into but a patch on the long darkness—slipped into the night and wore out into the daylight. Again, he lurched forward toward the east, and a chance to live. But he didn't make it!

"Thirty-nine miles—a scant hour on a train—lay between him and life when consciousness left him, and he stopped crawling, to lie very still in the wet slushy snow, a trickle of blood oozing from the corners of his mouth."

The detective stopped abruptly and half rose to his feet, his eyes on the door as if he thought someone was coming in. Then he sat down again and drained his long glass. I listened, too, and again I heard the soft footfalls on the hall floor, but they passed on again, so he continued:

"When Paul went down for the last time, the dog was fifty feet ahead, but he didn't go much farther. Turning around, he waited a few minutes to see if his master would get up again; then he came back whining piteously. The man didn't move. He poked his nose beneath the man's face and turned his head over. It stayed there. The dog licked him affectionately; licked his cheeks and neck and hair and chin. And his tongue went back into his mouth red with blood from the man's lips!

"For a moment he mouthed on the thin, sticky fluid, his dull eyes brightening, his gaunt flanks heaving; then he turned with a vicious snarl, drove his mouth into the man's throat and sank his teeth into the flesh!

"The man's body fought the dog. The man was unconscious of it all; he cannot remember when he quit crawling. Over and over in the snow they rolled, the man's hands clutching at the dog's head, the dog's four paws clawing at the heavy clothing that encased the 'food.' He was too weak to risk letting

go for a fresh hold for his teeth. Then the struggle ceased as suddenly as it began, with the dog uppermost.

"Over on the left a team of six huskies swung around a hill and stopped. A shot rang out, and Jamie, the Scotch collie, let go his hold and toppled over.

"They carried him into Dawson and found, when they undressed him, that he had forty pounds of gold—broad, flat flakes of it—around his waist. He had forgotten it was there. In two weeks he was on his feet again, thanks to his abnormal constitution and the influence of the small fortune he had brought in."

A knock sounded on the door and a boy pushed his head in.

"There's a man downstairs," he said, looking at me, "that wants to see you. He says to tell you he's in a hurry."

I got up and swung the door open. "And ever since then," I questioned,

"Paul has been afraid of a Scotch collie?" I stepped through the door, the doorknob in my hand, waiting for his answer before I went downstairs.

"Close the door!"

I whirled around. It was the same fear-stricken voice I had heard in the elevator in the afternoon. My friend the detective had got upon his feet and was standing behind the table, his face white and drawn, his eyes wide with genuine fear!

"Shut the door!" he roared again, gripping the table to steady his shrinking body. I obeyed the wild command and found myself in the hall, face to face with the girl and the dog. She was just coming out of the room opposite, and the dog had been waiting outside. It had been the soft patter of his feet we had heard in the hall. The dog, I noticed, was a Scotch collie.

So, after all, there was a reason for the Gibson house detective's absurdly high collar.



HOUSES

By Ludwig Lewisohn

MEN build them houses upon shore and height,
 And set a woman in the altar place,
 And get them children of their sturdy race,
 And trim their laws and mark the birds in flight,
 And glory in the nation's mounting might,
 Being very sure in all things bad to trace
 The growth of good—till o'er each foolish face
 Suddenly tramp the armies of the night.

Out with the stars and fireflies in the damp
 I watch the yellow flaring of their lamp
 Above the hearth—exulting still to be,
 My mate beside, so wild and homeless there,
 And as the world itself estranged and free,
 With terror and with laughter and despair.



MORALS—A matter of climate.

PERTINENT AND IMPERTINENT

By Owen Hatteras

WHITHER GOEST THOU?

For the benefit of those who have not yet engaged quarters for the eternal season, the advantages and disadvantages of the only two propositions available are set forth below. There is no middle ground—one must go up or down. Positively no deviation from printed portions of leases. For more detailed information call upon or address your local pastor.

PARADISE OFFERS:

The odor of incense.
A choir that practises eternally.
The endless twanging of harps.
Good people.
The select few.
The Church Board.
The people you never cared for.
Saints.
Millionaireless gold.
The Golden River.
St. Peter.
George Washington.
Dr. Parkhurst.
Lazarus.
The minister.
Walls of jasper and onyx.

Dizzy altitudes.
Missionary, Endeavor and temperance societies.
Cherubs.
Sanctity.

GEHENNA HOLDS OUT:

The fumes of sulphur.
The wailing of the damned.
The clinking of pitchforks.
Good fellows.
The mutable many.
The gang.
Your boon companions.
Sinners.
Goldless millionaires.
The Styx.
Cerberus.
Ananias.
Captain Kidd.
The Rich Man.
The fizz dispenser.
A continuous fireworks display overshadowing Vesuvius.
Bottomless pits.
Society.

Imps.
Sin.

SOMETIMES whole stories are told in single sentences, scandals published in a word:

"Wanted, a *plain* cook."

SIN'S REWARD: Man—a seat in Congress; woman—a grave in the potter's field.

HALF the sacrifices a woman makes for a man are devilish annoying to the man.

UNAPPRECIATED COMPLIMENTS

"THIS cake is fine, my dear. Where did you get it?"

"You are an elegant waltzer. The younger girls never dance so well."

"I came as soon as I heard of your trouble. I wanted you to feel that you had one friend, anyway."

"You look so neat, folks would never know you make your own clothes."

"You people surely set a good table; it's a mystery how you do it."

THE WIDOW OF WASDALE HEAD

By Arthur Wing Pinero

The time is ripe, say many theatrical authorities, for a return to the romantic drama. Here is a romantic one-act play by the man whom a very large number of critics and people interested in the theater, and in dramatic literature generally, hail as "the greatest Anglo-Saxon dramatist." Pinero's influence on the modern stage can hardly be overestimated; for serious dramatic treatment of modern problems, he has stood far above all English-speaking contemporaries. In this play he has created one of the most original ghosts in literature.

CHARACTERS

SIR JOHN HUNSLET
MR. EDWARD FANE
TUBAL (a servant at the inn)
REUBEN (Sir John's man)
THE VISITOR
MRS. JESMOND

PLACE: *An inn at Wasdale Head, Cumberland.*

TIME: *Reign of George III.*

SCENE—A gloomy, ancient room, paneled in oak, of the time of Henry VIII. Its ceiling, heavy with massive beams, is blackened by age; and altogether the apartment, which bears the appearance of having once belonged to a private mansion, is fallen into decay. In the wall on the right is a cavernous fireplace; at the back is a bay window, heavily shuttered and barred; on the left of the window, against the further wall, a staircase mounts to a landing from which a door opens into a narrow passage; and under the landing, in the left hand wall and on the level of the floor, there is another door, also admitting to a passage.

In the middle of the room is a round table, on which are a decanter of wine, some glasses, a jar of tobacco, clay pipes and a candlestick. At the left is an *escritoire*, on which is a standish. Against the staircase is an oaken dresser with crockery ware, pewter dishes and other utensils. In the bay window are a small table and stool. A riding cloak is thrown over the stool, and upon the table are a hat, a riding whip, a pair of gauntlets, and two pistols in their holsters. An armchair stands before the fireplace, within which there is a chimney seat. On the wall a number of hunting trophies are arranged, including a hunting horn hanging from a nail. The room is lighted by candles on the round table and in sconces on the wall. A fire is burning.

Seated at the round table, the one smoking and drinking, the other deep in thought, are SIR JOHN HUNSLET and EDWARD FANE. TUBAL is engaged at the dresser. The wind is moaning.

SIR JOHN (*a gallant-looking gentleman of eight-and-twenty, accoutered in a handsome riding dress and a periwig*)
Ned, my dear fellow, you don't drink!

EDWARD (*a grave young man of twenty-five, richly but soberly attired and wearing his own dark hair—rousing himself and filling his glass*)
A thousand pardons, Jack! (*Drinking*)
Welcome!

(TUBAL, *bearing a pair of snuffers upon a dish, advances to the round table and trims the candles. The moaning of the wind rises to a howl.*)

SIR JOHN (*to TUBAL*)
A wild night, my friend.

TUBAL (*a venerable, wizened figure, half groom, half waiter*)
Aye, an' 'tis like t' be warser afwore mworn. Theer'll be sleats loused an' flecin' this neet, depend on't. Heav'n send th' chimley stacks do hod oot!

SIR JOHN
Amen! (TUBAL *replaces the snuffers upon the dresser. There is a sharp, shrill sound from without, resembling the cry of a bird.*) What is that?

EDWARD
The sign of the house. 'Twill creak in that fashion, in the wind, for hours.

SIR JOHN
'Gad, an agreeable prospect! (TUBAL, *carrying a tray upon which are some remnants of a meal, goes out at the door under the landing. SIR JOHN, glancing over his shoulder, assures himself that he and EDWARD are alone.*) At last! (*Rekindling his pipe at the flame of one of the candles*) I thought that ancient servitor would never leave us. (EDWARD *rises and, walking away, stands gazing into the fire.*) And now, my dear Ned—my very dear Ned—in *amicitia autem nihil fictum*, as we learned to say at school—let me inform you without further delay of the cause of this intrusion.

EDWARD
'Tis no intrusion; and, to be candid, I

have guessed the object of your visit already.

SIR JOHN
Indeed? That being the case—

EDWARD
Confound you, Jack, you don't suppose I attribute your sudden and unlooked-for appearance to mere inclination for a gossip over a bottle! A man—Jack Hunslet least of all—does not quit town at this time of the year, journeying three hundred miles in the bargain, without an urgent reason. (*Facing SIR JOHN*) Confess you are upon a mission.

SIR JOHN (*smiling*)
Since you press me—

EDWARD
You are sent by my mother.

SIR JOHN
The poor fond lady is vastly concerned at your absence.

EDWARD
In the name of patience, why? Her letters plague me to death, Jack.

SIR JOHN
My good Ned, do, I entreat, reflect. With your usual perspicacity you have just observed that it must be a strong inducement that draws a town man into the country at this season. And yet—

EDWARD
Such an inducement was mine. I came into Cumberland in fulfillment of a pledge to Sir Roger Boultonwood—a pledge of long standing—

SIR JOHN
To be his guest at Hawkshead Priory. Your stay at Hawkshead ended two months ago.

EDWARD
In the meanwhile I had become bitten by the romantic beauty of the district. By the lord, Jack, 'tis a lovely locality, in spite of flood and tempest!

SIR JOHN

Ah, I am forgetting you are a poet, and a monstrous pretty one, to boot!

EDWARD

Pshaw! Pray don't roast me for my follies.

SIR JOHN (*laying his pipe aside*)

My dear fellow, if our follies ceased with the scribbling of verses, we should be warranted in esteeming ourselves wise. (*Rising*) And so 'tis solely the beauty of the district that detains you, hey, Ned?

EDWARD

Chance directed me to this particular spot; and my nag falling lame almost at the door here—

SIR JOHN

You determined to cultivate the muse, and to seek inspiration, by this sombre lake; (*Producing his snuffbox*) putting up at a bare inn, (*Significantly*) and despatching your servant back to Kensington within a fortnight.

EDWARD (*embarrassed*)

Why, as for that, I—I found I had little need for Gregory. He did but kick his heels about the place discontentedly.

SIR JOHN (*taking snuff*)

The sublimity of the scene proving less attractive to him than to his master. (*Closing his snuffbox*) Well?

EDWARD

W-well?

SIR JOHN

And when I have made my compliments at Hawkshead and, with your aid, explored this enchanting neighborhood, do we travel home in company? (*There is a moment's hesitation on Edward's part, and then he moves to the middle of the room without speaking.* Sir JOHN looks after him inquiringly.) Ned!

EDWARD (*hanging his head*)

Forgive me, Jack. I declare again 'tis the most beautiful district in the kingdom; nevertheless, I am deceiving you, Jack, woefully.

May, 1914—5

(*The door under the landing opens and Mrs. JESMOND enters followed by TUBAL, the latter carrying a bowl of steaming punch; and instantly the wind increases in force and the signboard resumes its squeaking. The loud slamming of distant doors is also heard.* Mrs. JESMOND is an elegant, girlish young lady, charmingly but simply dressed. She curtsies to Sir JOHN and to EDWARD, and then takes the bowl from TUBAL and places it upon the round table.)

MRS. JESMOND (*to TUBAL*)

Secure the doors of the buttery, Tubal; 'tis they that are banging. (*TUBAL shuffles out and Mrs. JESMOND addresses Sir JOHN, who is regarding her with respectful amazement. The wind lulls.*) I am sorry I was not by to receive you, sir. Late as it was, I was at my farm at Burnthwaite where I am in trouble with some sick beasts. I hear you have rid from Ulverston today, which is a weary road.

SIR JOHN (*stammering*)

Why, yes, I—I—

EDWARD (*presenting Sir JOHN*)

This gentleman is my friend Sir John Hunslet—

MRS. JESMOND (*curtseying again*)

Nay, if I had not been apprised of his arrival, there would be no necessity to name him. (*Advancing to Sir JOHN*) I saw Sir John once, when I was a child, driving his curricie in Hyde Park, and am never likely to forget the fine show he made.

SIR JOHN (*bowing low*)

Madam, I—I—I am vastly honored by your recollection of the circumstance.

MRS. JESMOND

Mr. Fane is heartily glad to see you here, Sir John; of that I am assured. Wasdale Head is but a stern and solitary spot at all times, and March our dreariest month.

SIR JOHN

'Faith, ma'am, Mr. Fane is no more rejoiced to see me than I him. We were *condiscipuli* at Winchester College, and

I hold him in great affection. (*Bowing again profoundly*) And suffer me to add that it increases my happiness in no inconsiderable degree—

MRS. JESMOND (*turning to EDWARD merrily*)

La! I fear Sir John doth not even yet apprehend who and what I am. Pray enlighten him.

EDWARD

Mrs. Jesmond, Jack, is mistress of this inn and tenant also of lands adjacent to it. 'Twill make you better acquainted with her when I tell you that she was Miss Woodroffe—Miss Elizabeth Woodroffe of Appleby.

SIR JOHN

One of the Woodroffes of Appleby! (*Seizing MRS. JESMOND'S hand*) My dear madam!

MRS. JESMOND (*withdrawing her hand*)

Nay, sir; my family and I are at enmity. (*Mournfully*) Widow of Mr. Henry Jesmond of Egremont; I prefer that description.

SIR JOHN

A widow, ma'am!

MRS. JESMOND

Two years a widow, and a humble taverner and farmer; and at your service. (*To EDWARD*) I have brought you a bowl of punch, Mr. Fane, thinking it will be grateful to your friend after his long journey. (*To SIR JOHN*) 'Tis of my mixing, and I beg your indulgence for the widow's offering.

SIR JOHN

'Gad, madam, I swear you shall join us! (*To EDWARD, who goes to the dresser*) A third glass, Ned!

MRS. JESMOND (*hastening to the staircase*)
Oh, mercy, Sir John!

SIR JOHN (*following her and regaining possession of her hand*)

I insist! (*Leading her to the round table*) On my knees—

MRS. JESMOND (*laughing*)

Ha, ha, ha!

(*The wind howls again and the sign-board creaks. EDWARD carries three glasses to the table, and MRS. JESMOND fills two of the glasses to the brim and hands them to the gentlemen, who stand one on each side of her.*)

SIR JOHN

Come, ma'am; bumpers! Ah, but that's not fair! Bumpers! (*The men drink, and MRS. JESMOND touches her lips with her glass.*) 'Pon my soul, 'tis delicious! 'Tis nectar! *Ille facit diles animos deus*, Ned; you remember! (*To MRS. JESMOND*) Permit me to compliment you on your skill, ma'am.

MRS. JESMOND (*replenishing the men's glasses, modestly*)

The credit is none of mine, Sir John. (*In a sad voice*) 'Twas my dear Harry that taught me.

SIR JOHN (*coughing sympathetically*)

Ahem! Ahem! (*Abruptly*) A toast! I call a toast, Ned! (*Raising his glass and looking at MRS. JESMOND with admiration*) I give you—

MRS. JESMOND (*quickly, raising her glass*)
The King!

SIR JOHN

Why, certainly, ma'am; and I am obliged to you for the reminder. His Most Gracious Majesty King George!

EDWARD (*drinking*)

The King!

SIR JOHN (*drinking*)

God bless him! (*Looking at MRS. JESMOND again*) Another!

MRS. JESMOND

Nay; spare me!

SIR JOHN

Ned! (*Raising his glass*) To the Lady of Wasdale!

EDWARD

The Lady of Wasdale!
(*The wind gives a sudden roar as the men drink the toast, and then subsides.*)

MRS. JESMOND (*curtseying*)

The widow thanks you, gentlemen, for your amiability; and with a full heart. (*With a change of manner*) And now, if you will excuse me, I will go to your bedchambers and see that your beds are properly prepared.

SIR JOHN (*seizing the candlestick from the table*)

Allow me to light you, ma'am.

MRS. JESMOND (*running up the stairs*)

'Tis not necessary; a lantern hangs in the corridor.

(*She makes a final curtsey on the landing and withdraws, leaving SIR JOHN half-way up the stairs, where he remains for a while as if rooted. EDWARD walks over to the fireplace and gazes down at the burning logs.*)

SIR JOHN (*after a silence*)

As I live, an adorable creature! (*He descends the stairs softly, replaces the candlestick and stands contemplating EDWARD.*) Ned!

EDWARD

Jack?

SIR JOHN

'Pon my conscience, you are right; Wasdale is the most beautiful district in the kingdom!

EDWARD (*turning to him*)

Ah, Jack, 'tis no matter for jesting.

SIR JOHN

Jesting! I swear I am all seriousness.

EDWARD (*ardently*)

Nay, then, if you are in earnest, is she not charming?

SIR JOHN

Charming? A divinity! 'Gad, you may well describe this as a romantic locality! A Woodroffe of Appleby the mistress of a house of public entertainment! Prodigious! (*Sitting at the table*) How the devil—

EDWARD (*coming to the table*)

'Tis a simple story. Young Mr. Henry Jesmond of Egremont, having squan-

dered the greater part of his patrimony, established himself here, with what remained of his fortune, as farmer and innkeeper. A short time previously he had met Miss Elizabeth Woodroffe at the Hunt Assembly at Kendal, and they had become desperately taken with each other. Her parents, discovering the undesirable attachment, intercepted communication between the lovers and confined their child within doors. Vain precautions! Elizabeth forced an escape, ran off with the object of her girlish infatuation and married him.

SIR JOHN

'Faith, since she hath been two years a widow, he must have carried her to church in a go-cart!

EDWARD

She was indeed but fifteen. She is little over seventeen now.

SIR JOHN

The deuce! 'Twas a brief wedded life.

EDWARD

A month.

SIR JOHN

Good Lud!

EDWARD

Riding homeward on a dark night with some boon companions from the hunt at Muncaster, Mr. Jesmond was thrown and mortally hurt. He breathed long enough, so the tale is told, to take his pistol from its holster and shoot his poor mare, who had broke a leg; and then he laid his head upon her warm ribs and stirred no more.

SIR JOHN (*shocked*)

My dear Ned! Leaving this delicately bred young lady, estranged from her family, to brew punch and to till the soil for her subsistence!

EDWARD (*sitting*)

Why, Jack, there's the wonder of it! Mrs. Jesmond's aptitude is amazing. Among the farmers hereabouts—statesmen, they term them in Cumberland—there's not one can match her in knowledge of crops and cattle. (*The wind mur-*

murs gently, almost musically.) I have seen the oldest and wisest of them approach her, hat in hand, to ask her counsel in a difficulty; and her reply is always the same.

SIR JOHN

The same?

EDWARD

"Come back to me," she will say, "as soon as you please after Friday, and you shall have my advice."

SIR JOHN

Friday?

EDWARD (*checking himself and then nodding uneasily*)

Er—'tis on a Friday night, when her household is abed and the inn is silent, that she sits here alone and reads her farming manuals, and makes up her books of account, and puts on her considering cap, as she phrases it. (*Looking round*) We are in her parlor, Jack.

SIR JOHN

How the wind sings! It hath a voice in it, positively! Her parlor?

EDWARD

Aye; the principal guest chambers are shut throughout the winter, and so she hath placed her room at my disposal. Every Friday night, at the stroke of ten, I leave her here, preparing for her vigil. (*Suddenly*) What is today?

SIR JOHN

Friday.

(*The wind utters a loud wail and the signboard creaks.*)

EDWARD (*rising and glancing at the clock*)

And look; 'tis close on ten now.

(*He resumes his former position at the fireplace and the wind its tuneful murmuring.*)

SIR JOHN (*after another silence*)

Well, I own I am mightily relieved, Ned. (*Rising*) 'Tis precisely as I suspected—that you had become entangled in a petticoat. (*Going to the punch-bowl*

and helping himself to punch) But a Woodroffe of Appleby is naught to be ashamed of, though 'twill be the tittle-tattle of the clubs and tea tables that your lady love hath kept a mug house. (*Drinking*) Have you declared yourself yet?

EDWARD (*still staring into the fire*)
No.

SIR JOHN (*smacking his lips*)

'Pon my honor, she is vastly genteel; she hath the *bel air* completely! I wager many of our town misses and madams—(*He breaks off, regarding EDWARD with surprise. The wind ceases.*) Why, man, what ails you? If Mrs. Jesmond had declined your suit, you could hardly be more glum.

EDWARD (*confronting SIR JOHN*)
Jack!

SIR JOHN (*startled at EDWARD's aspect*)
Ned?

EDWARD

Oh, Jack, I must confide in you! I am in torture!

SIR JOHN

Torture?

EDWARD

Terrible, grinding torment!

SIR JOHN

Odds life, what's this! Have you discovered that the widow wears a false curl or two?

EDWARD

For mercy's sake, don't take me lightly! (*In a whisper*) Jack, there is a mystery in this house.

SIR JOHN

Confusion!

EDWARD

A hideous mystery. (*He rises and begins pacing the room.*) And 'tis torturing me—driving me to distraction; and yet I lack the courage to attempt to unravel it.

SIR JOHN

Explain, Ned!

EDWARD

Oh, Jack, 'tis true that I leave Mrs. Jesmond here, and alone, every Friday night; but—heaven forgive me for doubting her!—ha, ha, ha, ha!—I fear she doesn't remain alone, Jack.

SIR JOHN

The devil!

EDWARD (*gripping the back of his chair*)

Hell fury, no; unless she hath the habit of talking to herself, her vigil is no solitary one!

SIR JOHN

Talking to herself!

EDWARD (*sitting and putting his elbows on the table and digging his fingers into his hair*)

Ha, ha, ha, ha! (*Groaning*) Oh, Jack, Jack!

(*Again there is a pause.* SIR JOHN slowly produces his snuffbox.)

SIR JOHN

Humph! (*Tapping the box*) 'Gad, you disappoint me, Ned; you do really! Who would have thought it of her? (*Taking snuff*) Pish! The jades; they are all of a pattern! When—(*The wind revives.*)

EDWARD (*raising his head*)

'Twas the Friday night in the second week of my lodging here, and I had retired to my bedchamber, carrying with me the delightful vision of her graceful, slender form as she sat, in this chair, bending over her books and papers. Some time after reaching my apartment, I recollected that I had left a letter from my mother lying upon the escritoire yonder; and I ordered my servant to fetch it. Presently the man reappeared, saying that, hearing Mrs. Jesmond's voice apparently in conversation, he had deemed it prudent not to risk incurring her displeasure by disturbing her.

SIR JOHN

In conversation?

EDWARD

I dismissed Gregory and stood for a . . . A hunting horn . . .

while at the window. Suddenly the idea possessed me to return, myself, to this room and recover my letter. Ha! The letter contained nothing of a private nature. I perceive now that 'twas merely a feeling of jealous surprise that impelled me.

SIR JOHN

You returned?

EDWARD

Yes. My ear was at the door, and I was wavering whether I should rap, when I was arrested by a sound behind me; and there was my servant, sheltered in an angle of the corridor, watching me curiously. I made an idle remark and again retired to my room; and the next morning I packed the fellow off to London, lest, his suspicions being aroused, he should play the spy on his own account.

SIR JOHN

What had you heard while listening at the door?

EDWARD

The low muttering of a voice, or of voices. I could distinguish nothing clearly, save that there was talking. (*Glancing at the door on the landing*) The door is stout and, as you see, distant.

SIR JOHN

And since then?

EDWARD

Every Friday night 'tis the same. I steal to the door, hear the same whisperings, and slink back irresolutely to my bedchamber. Stay! Twice or thrice I have heard a soft, wailful note, as if from an instrument, proceeding from this room.

SIR JOHN (*bringing himself erect*)
A signal!

EDWARD

'Sdeath, the thought hath crossed my mind! (*He rises and, ascending the stairs, removes the hunting horn from its nail.*) 'Tis such an instrument as this that would produce the sound.

SIR JOHN

EDWARD

'Twas the property of the late Mr. Jesmond, I suspect. (*Doubtfully*) But 'tis dull for want of use.

SIR JOHN

Nay, 'tis you that are dull. Look if its mouth is bright.

EDWARD (*examining it*)

Why, yes; the metal here shines like a guinea!

SIR JOHN

Ha! I lay five to four that is not the only mouth pressed by those lips of hers! (*EDWARD replaces the horn and descends the stairs*) My poor dear Ned, 'tis as plain as noonday; the widow's weekly vigil is but a ruse for entertaining her amoret at her ease. The trull! *Fronti nulla fides!* But you shall expose her, and tonight. (*Looking at the door on the landing and then pointing to the fire*) Quick; some ashes from the hearth! I'll fill the lock with 'em and stop her turning the key.

EDWARD

There is no lock on either door. They are bolted from without.

SIR JOHN

Strange! The widow is somewhat incautious. However, 'twill make your task the easier. (*EDWARD faces SIR JOHN with a gesture of protest.*) Come, man, away with your scruples! We will leave the pretty witch to her pretense of poring over her damnable books; and then you shall return and walk boldly in and interrupt her at her devotions.

EDWARD

By what right, Jack?

SIR JOHN

Pshaw! Do you imagine she isn't aware that you are honestly enamored of her, though no word hath yet been spoke? *There* is title sufficient for you. (*Sharply*) Is your sword hanging in your bedchamber?

EDWARD

Yes.

SIR JOHN

Put it up at your side.

EDWARD

Why, would you have me a murderer as well as an eavesdropper?

SIR JOHN

'Faith, I'd have you ready to defend yourself. A young lady of *ton* would scarcely dally with one of the clods of this beautiful district. (*Going to the table in the bay window and examining the pistols*) 'Tis to a gentleman of the road, probably—a cut-throat highwayman—that she extends her hospitality. (*Taking up his hat, whip and gauntlets, and carefully laying his cloak over the pistols*) These pistols are well primed. I'll warn Reuben not to remove them.

EDWARD

Oh, Jack, Jack, 'tis impossible!

SIR JOHN

Impossible?

EDWARD

'Tis impossible that she should be frail. I'll not believe it. She hath the look and the bearing of an angel. Her eyes, Jack! Did you observe her eyes?

SIR JOHN

Hang 'em, they *are* brilliant!

EDWARD

Nay, they're not brilliant. They resemble the blue of a summer morning ere the mist is dispelled. Her voice too! Her voice!

SIR JOHN

'Tis most musical, I admit.

EDWARD

Her voice hath the quality of the harp in it, when its strings are half muffled. (*Fiercely*) Mark me, Jack, if I find her no better than she should be, I'll never trust woman again!

SIR JOHN

Ned—

EDWARD

Never! Never!

SIR JOHN

Ned, I protest you recall Mr. Garrick to me, as the blackamoor in Shakespeare's play.

EDWARD

Ah—

SIR JOHN

When the great little man quits the stage, you shall fill his place, my dear Ned; I vow you shall.

(The wind swells for a moment as Mrs. JESMOND enters at the door under the landing, followed by TUBAL, with a lantern, and by REUBEN who is carrying two lighted candles. TUBAL goes to the window and, raising the lantern above his head, passes his hand over the bars of the shutters.)

MRS. JESMOND *(to EDWARD, sweetly but gravely)*

'Tis past ten o'clock. You have told Sir John?

SIR JOHN

Why, yes, ma'am; and, to say the truth, I shall not be sorry to find myself in a soft bed, and between a pair of sweet-smelling sheets, at an earlier hour than is customary with me.

REUBEN *(a bluff, burly fellow—standing by the table)*

Nor I either, sir. For of all the clattering, gusty places I've ever laid in, this Wasdale is the gustiest and the clatteringest—*(To Mrs. JESMOND)* saving your presence, ma'am.

SIR JOHN

Silence, Reuben! *(To Mrs. JESMOND, with a wave of the hand toward REUBEN)* A good, faithful animal, Mrs. Jesmond, but plaguily rough-tongued.

REUBEN

Well, sir, my tongue can't be rougher than the Cumberland weather; that's one comfort. *(Going to EDWARD and presenting him with a candlestick as Mrs. JESMOND crosses to SIR JOHN)* You'd best shield it with your hand, Mr. Fane—

MRS. JESMOND

Good night, Sir John. *(Curtseying)* 'Tis mighty civil of you to profess your willingness to be sent to bed like a bad child. *(Giving him her hand)* You must dream you are in London, sir, and card playing with some choice cronies.

SIR JOHN *(bending over her hand)*

Nay, madam, my dreams shall be of a far more interesting sort, I promise you.

(She curtsies to him again and returns to EDWARD who is watching her narrowly. TUBAL is now at the fireplace, mending the fire, and REUBEN at the table in the bay window.)

MRS. JESMOND *(giving her hand to EDWARD, a note of tenderness in her voice)*
Good night, Mr. Fane.

EDWARD *(with downcast eyes)*

Good night.

(He moves away, and Mrs. JESMOND goes to the escritoire and opens it with a key which dangles with others from her waist. Seeing that REUBEN is taking up the riding cloak and the pistols, SIR JOHN hastens to him on tiptoe.)

SIR JOHN *(under his breath, to REUBEN)*
No!

REUBEN *(astonished)*

Sir!

SIR JOHN *(his finger to his lips)*

Ssst! *(He motions to REUBEN to replace the pistols and riding cloak. REUBEN does so.)* And now, my dear Ned—*(Taking his candle from REUBEN and yawning demonstratively)* Ah-h-h-h! I declare I am as sleepy as the veriest owl. *(He ascends the stairs, EDWARD following him, as Mrs. JESMOND carries some books to the round table and deposits them there. SIR JOHN makes her a grand bow from the landing, EDWARD a lesser one.)* My dear madam!

(Mrs. JESMOND curtsies to them deeply and returns to the escritoire. SIR JOHN and EDWARD retire. TUBAL shuffles across the room on his way to the door under the landing.)

REUBEN *(in a low voice, clapping TUBAL on the back)*

Good night, old buck! *(TUBAL has a fit of coughing.)* Why, a man of your kidney should be in London. You'd turn all the girls' heads in London within a week. *(To Mrs. JESMOND, as he goes up the stairs)* Good-night, ma'am.

MRS. JESMOND (*bringing more books and some papers to the table*)

Good night, friend.

(REUBEN withdraws, closing the door.)

TUBAL (*at the door under the landing, to MRS. JESMOND*)

Be theer owt else I can do for 'ee?

MRS. JESMOND

No, I thank you, Tubal. Are the maids in their beds?

TUBAL

Aye, an' deid asleeap, I reckon—t'hussies! Good neet, mistress.

MRS. JESMOND

Good night.

(TUBAL disappears, closing the door, and the wind again becomes violent and the signboard squeaks as if in pain. MRS. JESMOND remains quite still for a while; then, deliberately and methodically, and with an altered look on her face, she clears the table and fetches the standish from the escritoire. Then she goes to the lower door, opens it a few inches and, after peeping along the passage, shuts the door silently. She repeats this proceeding at the door on the landing and finally, apparently satisfied, comes halfway down the stairs and unhooks the hunting horn from the wall and blows a long, faint blast upon it; whereupon the wind gives a thundering bellow, the flames of the candles flicker and for a moment there is almost total darkness. Then a bluish light pervades the room and the GHOST of a young man in hunting dress and a bob wig is seen, standing in an easy attitude with its back to the fire. There is another loud gust, followed by the crash of falling slates.)

MRS. JESMOND (*regarding the GHOST with a tender expression and speaking in soft, caressing tones*)

That's the slates of the old lean-to in the stableyard.

GHOST (*in a calm, matter-of-fact manner*)

Well, you mun ha' 'em put on again, Betty. Gi' th' job to Hobbs at Ulverston. I'm sick o' Finch of Gosforth;

leastways I was, before I met wi' my accident.

(MRS. JESMOND replaces the hunting horn and descends the stairs. Gradually the wind drops.)

MRS. JESMOND

'Tis a terrible night for you to be abroad, Hal. I had almost hoped you wouldn't obey my summons.

GHOST (*pulling off its filmy gloves*)

Eh, there you go, lass! How oft have I told thee th' weather makes no difference to me! (*Gloomily*) All weather's one t' a ghost.

MRS. JESMOND (*with a sigh*)

Yes, I forget. (*Looking down at her books and papers*) Shall we get to work?

GHOST

Aye, sit thee doon. (*She seats herself at the left of the table and chooses a pen from the standish.*) An' hark ye! If these winds continue t' blow, thou'dst best bring th' ewe flock off th' fells into th' lowlands. D'ye hear?

MRS. JESMOND

I hear, my dear.

GHOST (*taking out a spectral snuffbox and making a pretense of snuffing*)

Is there aught amiss this week here or at th' farms?

MRS. JESMOND

Four of the shorthorn bullocks at Burnthwaite are lame from kibe. What am I to do for 'em?

GHOST

Kibe! Why, I gave thee a remedy for kibe a year since.

MRS. JESMOND (*pouting*)

I know you did, Hal; but I failed to note it.

GHOST (*dusting its neckcloth with the phantom of a pocket handkerchief*)

I'm sorely afeared you've no head, Betty; thou'rt but a heedless, gay-

hearted wench. What ha' you an' th' lads been doing for 't?

MRS. JESMOND

Rubbing tallow fat betwixt the claws of the poor brutes.

GHOST

Tallow fat!

MRS. JESMOND

Y-y-y-es.

GHOST

Zounds! I marvel you ha'n't rubbed in some o' th' sweet pomade thou hast sent thee from Lunnun for thy ringlets!

MRS. JESMOND (*sheepishly*)

He, he, he, he!

GHOST

Ods-bobs, you may well grin! 'Twould vastly tickle me, were I alive. Come, dip thy pen in th' ink! (*Dictating*) "Kibe."

MRS. JESMOND (*writing in a book*)

"Kibe—"

GHOST

"Anoint wi' blue vitriol an' hog's lard—"

MRS. JESMOND

"Blue vitriol—"

GHOST

Williams at St. Bridget's will sell thee blue vitriol. (*She goes on writing.*) Mix th' stuff half an' half, an' within a fortnight th' beast will be sound-footed.

MRS. JESMOND (*sanding her writing*)

Thank you, dear Harry.

GHOST

What's thy next item, Bet?

MRS. JESMOND (*rummaging among her papers*)

The next— (*Breaking off and gazing at the apparition wistfully*) Hal—

GHOST

Hey?

MRS. JESMOND (*in a voice full of yearning*)
Sit in thy chair tonight; yonder, while I am questioning thee, wilt thou?

GHOST (*with an air of patronage*)

Certainly I will, child, if it will afford thee any gratification. (*Seating itself in the armchair*) 'Tis all th' same t' a ghost whether he be sitting or standing or lying.

MRS. JESMOND

Yes, but it seems more domestic to see thee ensconced in what was thy accustomed seat.

GHOST (*throwing one leg over the other and sticking its thumbs in the armholes of its waistcoat*)

Which posture d'ye most fancy, Bet—this—

MRS. JESMOND (*nodding*)

I remember thee in it constantly.

GHOST (*extending its legs and resting its fists on its hips*)

Or this?

MRS. JESMOND

That was your position when you were engaged in argument. I had rather the other. (*The Ghost resumes its previous attitude*) Oh! Oh, that I might fill thy pipe, and light it for thee at the candle, and slip the scarlet end of it into thy poor mouth, as I used to do!

GHOST

Nay, lass, that's talking sheer nonsense. Come, 'tis no good whimpering; whimpering won't mend matters. Get on wi' thy work.

MRS. JESMOND (*leaning back in her chair and beating her clenched hands on the table*)

Oh! Oh, how cold you are! How cold you are!

GHOST (*annoyed*)

Cold! 'Pon my soul, that's monstrously inconsiderate an' unkind!

MRS. JESMOND

Ah, have I hurt thee?

GHOST

Hurt me!

THE SMART SET

MRS. JESMOND
I ask your pardon, Hal.

GHOST
Nay, 'tis all very fine! (*Rising*) Thou know'st 'tis not in my power to console thee.

MRS. JESMOND (*snatching at her pen*)
Ah, you're not vanishing! You'll not vanish so soon! Farry! (*The GHOST wags its head sulkily*) Harry! Harry!

GHOST
I'll not if thou'lt be reasonable an' polite, an' I can sarve thee.

MRS. JESMOND
I *will* be reasonable; I *will* be. Oh, 'tis as hard on you as on me that, being a shade, you cannot take me to your breast; and 'twas cruel of me to complain! I swear I won't offend again, Hal.

GHOST (*loftily*)
Proceed, then.

MRS. JESMOND
Thank you, my dear. (*Drying her eyes hurriedly and referring to a paper*) Andrew Todd of Mickie Gill hath begged me to test an example of oats that he hath brought me. The germination of his oat seed last season greatly discontented him.

GHOST
Zooks, but Andrew was ever a fool!

MRS. JESMOND (*humbly*)
Nay, I am worse; for I am even more ignorant than Andrew how to make the test.

GHOST
I'll tell 'ee. Tear two strips from thine old flannel petticoat an' lay th' seed between 'em an' float 'em in a crock full o' water. (*She again writes in her book.*) Stand th' vessel in thy sunniest window, an' in less than three days thou'lt be able to show Todd how many of his oats are speared. (*With a hollow, vain laugh*) Ha, ha, Maister Todd!

MRS. JESMOND (*throwing down her pen suddenly and leaning her head upon her hands*)
Oh, Hal, Hal!

GHOST
Why, what's wrong wi' thee now?

MRS. JESMOND
Alas, and alas, I am but an impostor!

GHOST
Impostor?

MRS. JESMOND (*starting up and walking about*)

A cheat! I despise myself for fobbing off these dalesmen with the belief that 'tis I that helps them in their difficulties.

GHOST
Why, 'tis you that do it, Betty, in sober truth.

MRS. JESMOND (*reprovingly*)
Harry!

GHOST
I say 'tis so. An' were I alive, I should be consumedly proud of you, Bet; I should, b' George, though I do upbraid thee on occasions when thou dost des- sarve it.

MRS. JESMOND
Thou wert never logical, Harry! Were you alive, 'twould be known that the cleverness is all thine. Oh, 'twould relieve my conscience of a heavy burden, could I but reveal that you visit me in this manner!

GHOST
An' scare th' folks for miles round! Th' inn an' th' farms 'ud be shunned, an' thou'd be reduced to beggary.

MRS. JESMOND (*dejectedly*)
Oh! Oh!

GHOST
Nay, you need ha' no qualms on that score, lass. 'Tis lucky, I confess, that I had a bent for farming as well as for dicing an' cock fighting; but husband an' wife are one, an' so, I take it, are a widow an' her husband's ghost, till she falls in love wi' another chap. (*Drawing itself up*) There's logic for thee! (*The*

wind is heard again, and a whistle from the signboard. The GHOST's expression changes.) 'Egad, but that reminds me, Bet—

MRS. JESMOND
Of what, Hal?

GHOST (*scowling*)
Speaking o' falling in love, th' young gentleman that quartered himself here two months ago is still under thy roof. (*Her body slowly stiffens.*) Thou didst mention his name an' quality to me once—

MRS. JESMOND (*turning to the GHOST but avoiding his eyes*)

Mr. Edward Fane? He resides with his mother, who is wealthy, at Kensington in London.

GHOST (*with a sneer*)
That's him; a handsome, black young man, in 's own hair.

MRS. JESMOND (*advancing frigidly*)
Why, indeed, Mr. Fane wears neither wig nor powder; but, for the rest, I have scarce observed his looks.

GHOST
'Faith, he hath obsarved *thine!* I've seen him through th' shutters, as I've rid past thy window on my gray mare, an' he hath been sitting opposite thee at table an' gazing at thee most fixedly.

MRS. JESMOND
'Tis when Mr. Fane and I have been playing a game of backgammon together that you must have remarked us.

GHOST
Eh, so you play backgammon wi' him, do 'ee, Betty?

MRS. JESMOND
To while away his evenings. Wasdale hath few attractions for a man of fashion; and this one is so excellent a customer that 'tis worth taking some pains to divert him.

GHOST
Nay, I wager he finds no lack of divar-sion at Wasdale, or he'd not linger as he

does. (*Lowering at her*) He's sweet on thee, lass, to a certainty.

MRS. JESMOND (*indignantly*)
Hall

GHOST
Aye, an' I warn thee, thou'lt be losing thy heart to *him*, if thou'rt not careful.

MRS. JESMOND
Harry!

GHOST (*bitterly*)
An' then I shall hear th' blast o' th' horn no more o' Friday nights, in spite of all thy oaths an' tears an' protestations; an' thou'lt cast me aside, an' out o' thy thoughts, like thy worn padesoyle!

MRS. JESMOND
Oh! Oh! As if I could ever be inconstant to thee, my first and last love! Shame on you, poor grisly thing that thou art, for thinking it of me!

GHOST
Dang it, there you go again! Grisly!

MRS. JESMOND (*moving about the room in a heat*)

Oh! Oh! I'll play no more backgammon with Mr. Fane from this time forth, I do assure you, nor with any other living man! Oh!

GHOST
'Twas not backgammon you were playing when I last espied you both, Betty. Mr. Fane had a paper in 's hand an' appeared to be reciting to thee.

MRS. JESMOND (*halting*)
Ah, yes; he hath a taste for writing poetry, and was reading one of his compositions. (*Returning to the table, eagerly*) That is the reason Mr. Fane lingers at Wasdale, Harry; the grandeur of the district elevates his mind, he declares. Immediately he reined up at this door, two months back, and I went out to greet him, he looked at me and said, "Why, madam, this is the very spot I have been searching for in my dreams!"

GHOST (*giving another hollow laugh*)
Ha, ha, ha, ha!

MRS. JESMOND (*reproachfully*)

Oh, Hal, thou wert never bookish; you never knew aught of poets and their ways!

GHOST

Not I. An' what's his poetry like, lass? I warrant 'tis all "love" an' "dove," an' that sort o' muck.

MRS. JESMOND

Nay, 'tis somewhat better than muck; though of no great merit perhaps.

GHOST

The piece he was reading when I watched thee—

MRS. JESMOND

'Twas called—how was it styled?—"To Aminta"—

GHOST

Aminta?

MRS. JESMOND

"Aminta" is a fanciful conceit; she is no real person. 'Tis modish in a poet to inscribe his rhymes to Julia, or Chloe, or—or Aminta. Pshaw! Thou shalt judge how harmless the verses are. (*Disdainfully*) "To Aminta, a Lady Dwelling in the Country."

GHOST (*suspiciously*)

A lady dwelling i' th' country?

MRS. JESMOND (*reciting, at first with a show of indifference, then with genuine fervor*)

Belov'd Aminta, shall thy lone retreat
Hold thee forever in his close embrace,
Whilst the vast waters stretching at thy feet
Capture the sole reflection of thy face?

Nay, let the lordly hill, the softer glen,
In nature's sempiternal gifts secure,
Suffer thy charms t' illumine the haunts of men,
Purge the vile town and make the city pure!

(*She stands absorbed, looking into space. After a short silence, the signboard creaks again gently.*)

GHOST

Ha, ha, ha, ha! (*She starts.*) Why, thou hast learned every syllable of it!

MRS. JESMOND (*guiltily*)

Oh, 'tis but simple stuff, and readily committed to memory.

GHOST

A lady dwelling i' th' country! 'Tis thee, o' course!

MRS. JESMOND

La, there are hundreds of ladies that dwell in solitude in the country, Hal!

GHOST

"Whilst the vast waters stretching at thy feet—" 'Tis our lake o' Wastwater!

MRS. JESMOND (*resuming her seat at the table and handling her papers in a flutter*)

Nay, I am weary of talking about this Mr. Fane—

GHOST

An' he'd bear thee off t' Lunnun, would he, t' th' haunts o' men, th'—

MRS. JESMOND (*picking up a paper hastily*)

I've a question to ask thee concerning the crooked field below Buckbarrow—

GHOST

Ha, ha, ha, ha!

MRS. JESMOND

Harry— (*There is a sharp knocking at the upper door, followed by the click of the latch.*) Ah! (*Again the wind thunders, and again the candle flames flicker and the room is momentarily in semi-darkness. Then the room brightens and EDWARD is seen upon the landing. The GHOST has disappeared.*) Who's there?

(*EDWARD shuts the door at which he has entered and, staring about him wildly, rapidly descends the stairs. The wind moderates.*)

EDWARD

'Tis I. (*Running his eyes round the room*) Forgive me, madam.

MRS. JESMOND (*composedly, as though engrossed in work*)

Indeed, sir, you might have waited till I bade you come in.

EDWARD (*bewildered*)

M-m-may I have a word with you?

MRS. JESMOND

If you will remember that I am at my books and papers, and that even an inn-keeper is not always at the beck and call of a guest.

EDWARD

Nay, ma'am, I have apologized for my fault. (*Looking keenly in the direction of the lower door and the space under the staircase*) The fact is that, hearing voices, I had less compunction in breaking in upon you than I should otherwise have had.

MRS. JESMOND (*with assumed surprise*)
Voices?

EDWARD

The sounds of talking and laughing.

MRS. JESMOND

Why, Mr. Fane, 'tis not improbable that I chatter to myself while I am calculating my figures.

EDWARD

And laugh!

MRS. JESMOND

And laugh. (*Rising and moving to the fireplace*) The farmer—man or woman—that attempts to cultivate this grudging valley may well laugh, sir, though the laugh be on the wrong side o' the mouth.

EDWARD

Oh, but this is evasion! Mrs. Jesmond—

MRS. JESMOND

Evasion!

EDWARD

Is there anybody concealed here?

MRS. JESMOND

Concealed?

EDWARD (*peering into the space beneath the staircase and then returning and confronting her*)

Nay, then, he must have left the room as I entered it, and by this door!

MRS. JESMOND

Mr. Fane!

EDWARD (*going to her*)

I swear I heard more than one voice,

and that a man's! By heaven, you are deceiving me!

MRS. JESMOND

Deceiving you, sir! (*Haughtily*) Why, what am I to you, or you to me, that I should deceive you, or enlighten you, on any affair that doth not concern your abode at this inn? So that your bed is clean, and your food wholesome, and my charges are just and fairly reckoned, and you acquit them promptly, what obligations, pray, are we under to each other? (*Stamping her foot*) Withdraw from my room, Mr. Fane, and suffer me to resume my work! Stand aside, sir! (*He allows her to pass him but, as she does so, he catches her by the arm.*) Unhand me!

EDWARD (*passionately*)

Mrs. Jesmond—

MRS. JESMOND (*releasing herself and facing him*)

Oh, 'tis cowardly of you; and when my servants are abed, and I am unprotected! (*He retreats a step or two.*) Oh! You that have writ such tender poems, and delivered them with so much sensibility!

EDWARD (*with dignity*)

Nay, madam, you misinterpret my action. Believe me, you have nothing to fear from my violence. (*Drawing himself erect*) And yet you are right; I am a coward, and an arrant one.

MRS. JESMOND

Mr. Fane!

EDWARD

A coward. What else am I when I have hesitated so long to free myself from the malign spell your beauty hath cast upon me—

MRS. JESMOND (*faintly*)

Malign—

EDWARD

When, suspecting you to be false and unworthy—as I have for many weeks past, and as I have tonight proved you to be—I have foolishly persuaded myself, against my innermost convictions, of your probity and virtue!

MRS. JESMOND

False and unworthy! You are mad, sir! False to whom?

EDWARD

To me.

MRS. JESMOND

To—to you!

EDWARD

Why, madam, you know that I have loved you—*(She puts her hand to her heart with a quick motion)*—do love you!

MRS. JESMOND *(trembling)*

Indeed, and indeed, Mr. Fane—

EDWARD *(sternly)*

Hush! To deny it is a lie! *(She makes a movement, as if to escape, and again he detains her.)* Stay! You shall hear me! *(She sinks into the chair.)* I have loved you from the first moment I saw you, when, on that evil day on which accident brought me to this inn, and I checked my bridle at the porch, you stood with your hand resting on my horse's shoulder and your eyes drooped before mine. I have loved you from that moment, I repeat; *(Accusingly)* while you, with the quick instinct that wakes intelligence in a woman's brain, if not response within her bosom, have divined my feelings and cruelly allowed me to foster them!

MRS. JESMOND *(weakly)*

I have oft been struck with the idea that you are exceeding well-disposed toward me—

EDWARD

Well-disposed! Ah, do not prevaricate!

MRS. JESMOND

But you have never spoke a word of love to me, I do protest.

EDWARD

Not expressly; for 'twas on the night previous to the day on which I had intended to throw myself at your feet that, returning from my bedchamber to fetch a letter, I was startled by mysterious murmurs issuing from this room.

MRS. JESMOND *(raising her head)*

Ah!

EDWARD

Since then *(Pointing to the door on the landing)* I have listened there every Friday night—

MRS. JESMOND

Listened!

EDWARD *(abashed)*

I confess it—listened with my hand upon the latch, lacking the courage to enter and perhaps confirm the dreadful doubts that assailed me.

MRS. JESMOND *(scornfully)*

You do yourself scant justice, Mr. Fane. You are full of courage tonight, sir, at any rate!

EDWARD

Because I have tonight heard what I have not hitherto clearly detected—the sound of a man's voice; and have convinced myself that, aided by a specious but ill-contrived stratagem, you are receiving a visitor clandestinely. *(She rises, standing before him with her head averted. The wind swells again.)* Mrs. Jesmond, I set out for London tomorrow, carrying with me recollections that will remain with me till death—recollections of the hours we have spent together in this apartment; hours of bliss, before I mistrusted thee, and afterward when your charms have lulled me into the belief that the possessor of so fair an exterior must be the most innocent, as you are assuredly the most captivating, of your sex; hours of anguish, when doubt hath gained supremacy and I have endured the torments of the damned. Farewell! Did I desire retaliation, 'twould be in the thought that at some future time you will reproach yourself for having shaken beyond repair the faith of one who would have crowned you with his honor and esteem, adored you with his body, defended you with his sword, and given you a heart to lean upon that hath been touched by no other woman. *(Bowing low)* Madam—

MRS. JESMOND *(with a deep curtsey)*

Farewell, sir. *(He goes toward the staircase. Suddenly, with a gasp, she runs*

to the foot of the stairs and intercepts him.)
Ah, no! Mr. Fane—

EDWARD (*drawing back*)
Mrs. Jesmond!

MRS. JESMOND
Mr. Fane, I cannot bear that we should part thus. Edward! 'Tis true; I am false and unworthy, as you have accused me of being. But 'tis my—my secret visitor that I am false to, and not to thee. (*Coming closer to him*) Edward—

EDWARD (*repelling her with a gesture*)
Ah—

MRS. JESMOND
Nay, don't put me from thee, for this once. (*Simply*) Edward, I have known of thy love for me; I have known it from the beginning. And, oh—heaven pardon me, my dear—(*Laying her head against him*)—I have loved that that thou shouldst love me!

EDWARD (*after a struggle*)
Betty!
(*He folds her in his arms. The wind roars and the signboard screeches.*)

MRS. JESMOND (*feebly*)
And now—enough. (*Looking up at him*) Only I beg thee to glance up at my window as you ride away tomorrow. Thou wilt do that for me, Edward?

EDWARD (*in sudden fury*)
Oh!
(*He catches up the riding cloak from the table in the bay window, flings it aside, and seizes one of the pistols.*)

MRS. JESMOND
Pistols!

EDWARD (*examining the lock of the pistol*)
They are Sir John Hunslet's. (*Grimly*) He left them lying here, lest I should encounter the wretch that hath obtained such a pernicious influence over thee.

MRS. JESMOND (*laughing wildly*)
Ha, ha, ha, ha!

EDWARD (*grasping the pistol tightly*)
The villain—he that visits thee—where is he hid?

MRS. JESMOND
Ha, ha, ha, ha! Thy bullet cannot harm him. 'Twould but whistle through him and strike the wall.

EDWARD (*gripping her wrist*)
Collect thyself; thou art out of thy senses!

MRS. JESMOND (*desperately*)
Am I! Thou shalt see! (*Pointing to the hunting horn*) Unhook that horn from its nail and bring it to me.

EDWARD
The signal!

MRS. JESMOND
What, hast thou heard that also?
(*Hurriedly he takes down the hunting horn and hands it to her. Again she blows upon it, and again the wind gives a mighty bellow, the candles flicker and the bluish light suffuses the room.*) Look!
(*Following the direction of her eyes, he turns and finds the GHOST at his elbow.*)

EDWARD (*under his breath*)
Merciful powers! (*The pistol drops from his relaxed fingers and rattles on the stones of the floor. Slowly, with measured tread and with its head bent, the GHOST walks to the fireplace and stands there, gazing into the fire. The force of the wind decreases.*) A ghost! A ghost! A ghost!

MRS. JESMOND (*placing the horn upon the round table and addressing EDWARD in a hushed, steady voice*)
'Tis my husband's spirit, Mr. Fane. My grief called it to me in the young days of my bereavement, and it hath visited me since every week, and guided me in the conduct of my land and property; (*With a slight shiver*) and 'tis my resolve to remain as constant to this shadow as though 'twere blood and bone. You have been pleased to take a kindly interest in me, sir; and you will be glad, I am sure, when you quit Wasdale, to

reflect that the poor widow that hath done her best for your comfort and entertainment is not entirely alone. (*Curt-seying again*) Good night.

(*Speechless, EDWARD backs away from her and goes out at the door under the landing. She sees that the door is closed and then advances timorously. The GHOST does not stir.*)

Er—I hope thou'rt not angry, Hal. 'Twas Mr. Fane that interrupted us. He returned to this room for some purpose, and our talk and laughter reached him as he was opening the door. 'Twas indiscreet in us to speak so loud. (*Coming to the table*) But, la, 'tis no matter; he is a person to be trusted! (*Lightly, toying with her books and papers*) Besides—ha, ha—it hath afforded me the opportunity of hinting to my gentleman that, should he ever revisit Wasdale Head, 'twould be useless for him to pursue thy Betty with his attentions, were he so minded. (*Seating herself at the table again*) He doth depart tomorrow, I thank the Lord! (*Sorting her litter*) What was it I was about to ask thee? (*Picking up a paper*) Ah, yes; the crooked field by Buckbarrow. (*The GHOST slowly turns and faces her and she stares at it agape. Its form and features have become less distinct.*) Why—how—how dim you are, Harry!

GHOST (*harshly, but in fainter tones than before*)

Dim! 'Egad, I should think so! Thou know'st that I owe this ghostly existence o' mine only to thy love for me.

MRS. JESMOND

W-w-well?

GHOST

Well! Ha, ha! I marvel, after witnessing what hath passed 'twixt you and Mr. Fane, that thou canst discern me at all, Betty.

MRS. JESMOND (*aghast*)

Witnessing—

GHOST

Aye. Did 'ee imagine I was out of eye-an'-earshot?

MRS. JESMOND

Y-y-y-yes.

GHOST

Not I. I've been wi' thee th' whole while. Ho, ho, ho, ho! (*There is a pause, and then MRS. JESMOND, pressing her temples, falls back in her chair with a groan.*) Nay, lass, 'tis I that should be making a fuss; an', b' George, I would, too, but that thou hast diminished me to that degree that I'm scarce capable of it!

MRS. JESMOND (*raising herself*)

Oh! Oh! (*Dropping her outstretched arms upon the table and laying her head upon them*) Oh-h-h-h!

(*The wind gives a sigh and the sign-board creaks sympathetically.*)

GHOST (*wagging its head shakily*)

Ah, Bet, Bet, I own I've never suspected you would sell me i' this fashion. (*With a low cry, she rises and throws herself at the GHOST's feet.*) That thou shouldst prove such a smooth-tongued, double-faced hypocrite! Dang it, that beats me, that had such a vast knowledge o' women!

MRS. JESMOND

Oh, hush, hush! Were I a hypocrite, and merely feigning love for thee, there would be nothing of thee visible, Harry; not a vestige. (*Piteously*) Ah, I've told thee already tonight, logic was never thy strong point!

GHOST (*meditatively*)

Zounds, I suppose 'tis possible for a woman to love a live man an' yet ha' a softish feeling for a dead one.

MRS. JESMOND (*groveling and weeping*)

Oh! Oh!

GHOST

But 'tis plain, Betty, that thy love for Fane is uppermost—

MRS. JESMOND

Oh! Oh!

GHOST

An' so, to presarve a morsel o' dignity, 'twould be prudent o' me to bid thee good-bye before I fade from thee completely.

MRS. JESMOND

No, no, Hal! Listen! (*Sitting up and clasping her hands supplicatingly*) Oh, listen! (*The wind sighs again and the signboard creaks.*) Hal—Hal, when the grave closed over thee, I did indeed believe that I was done with love forever, and that my heart was but a dry and withered plant; but, oh, there are seasons when it will persist in putting forth green shoots, and when I find strange hopes and joys quickening within me that are unbecoming a woman that is devoted to the memory of her dead husband! Alas, Harry, 'twas at such a time that Mr. Fane came upon me! Though 'twas in January that he alighted at my door, the sun was shining in the valley, and our robins were chirping, and there was a tremble of spring in the air; and 'twas then, when he had crossed my threshold and I filled him a cup of wine, and faced him while he drank—'twas then that I felt those green shoots in my breast burst and spread their leaves. (*Wildly*) But, oh, my dear, he is going, as you are informed—he is going—and 'tis not likely that he will come my way again, nor that another young man of his rank and character will ever resort to this lonely inn. And so you must pardon me this one stumble; and by all that I hold most sacred, Hal—

GHOST (*mournfully*)

Nay, nay, thou shalt make no more promises. Thou hast perjured thyself enough as it is.

MRS. JESMOND

Perjured myself! Ah, yes! (*Lowering her head in abasement*) Oh, Hal, Hal, Hal!

GHOST

Ah, I perceive now—an' so dost thou, Bet—'tis a sad mistake for a widow in th' first flood of her grief to call her husband back from his tomb. What we do in heat we repent in cold. An' if 'tis so wi' widows in general, 'tis especially so wi' thee, that are still but a girl. (*She sobs.*) Zooks, 'tis my fault for having answered thy cry! I should ha' had more brains; an' would ha' had, but that I lost some in my accident. (*She sobs*

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again.) So, come, dry thine eyes. I tell 'ee I don't blame thee, nor bear thee malice; no, nor him. (*Attempting, with small success, to repeat his pretense of snuffing*) 'Tis th' way o' th' world. Ods-bobs, who is missed in it? (*Philosophically, flourishing his phantom pocket handkerchief*) Why, I recollect losing my dog Pincher when I was a bachelor, that died o' jaundice. How I raved about 'un, an' stamped up an' down th' stable where he lay stiff! But a week or two later I was buying a couple o' pups at Gosforth fair, an' was in love wi' them, an' forgot Pincher; an' th' following week I met thee, and fell in love wi' thee, an' forgot th' pups. (*Producing its gloves and speaking in the tone of a person preparing to depart*) Well, lass—

MRS. JESMOND

Ah! (*Turning swiftly, with a hoarse scream*) Ah-h-h-h!

GHOST (*drawing on a glove*)

Perhaps 'tis all for th' best, though 't has been a sore blow to my pride. (*Hopefully*) 'Egad, as I shall ride out no more, maybe 'twill settle th' question o' my future, one way, or tother!

MRS. JESMOND (*frantically*)

Harry! Harry!

GHOST

Th' gray mare, too! She did but blunder once in her life; 'tis rough on her to have had her rest broke for a single slip.

(*The wind roars again furiously, and the room darkens, as the GHOST glides toward the window. Struggling to her feet, Mrs. JESMOND staggers after the GHOST and tries to clutch it.*)

MRS. JESMOND

Harry! No, no! Hal! Ah, I can't hold thee! I can't hold thee! Oh!

GHOST (*softly*)

Coom, mare, coom! Coom, coom, coom!

MRS. JESMOND

Wait! Wait! (*The GHOST vanishes.*) Ah-h-h-h! Come back! Harry! My

husband! *(She rushes, still crying out, to the stairs and gropes for the hunting horn; then, remembering that it is upon the round table, she flies to the table and seizes it.)* Ah! Harry! Harry! I love thee! I swear I love thee! *(She blows upon the horn, and instantly the shutters disappear and the GHOST is seen upon the gray mare, the wild country beyond. Again the wind bellows.)* Oh! Wait! Ah-h-h-h! *(Holding the reins in its left hand, the GHOST waves its right hand in adieu; and then, with a hollow whoop, it claps its spurs to the mare's sides, and horse and rider plunge into the murk. The shutters reappear and the room is bright once more.)* Oh, no! Thou'rt not gone! Thou'rt not gone! Harry! *(She puts the horn to her mouth again and blows a loud blast. Then she runs about the room, searching and calling.)* Harry! Harry! I want thee! Where are you? *(Looking into the space under the staircase.)* Are you there, Hal? *(In the bay window)* Hal, I've something to ask thee! 'Tis important! *(At the fireplace)* Harry! Oh, Harry! *(Suddenly, throwing the horn from her)* Ah-h-h-h! He's gone! He's gone!

(The door on the landing opens and EDWARD and SIR JOHN HUNSLET appear.)

EDWARD

Mrs. Jesmond—

MRS. JESMOND

He's gone! *(To EDWARD)* You have driven him away! I hate you! I—Harry—

(She topples to the ground. EDWARD and SIR JOHN descend the stairs rapidly and EDWARD, kneeling beside MRS. JESMOND, lifts her into his arms. The wind lessens.)

EDWARD

Mrs. Jesmond! Betty! Betty! *(To SIR JOHN, in alarm)* Oh, Jack—

(SIR JOHN takes the candlestick from the round table and bends over MRS. JESMOND.)

SIR JOHN *(quietly)*

'Tis only a swoon. *(Carrying the candlestick, he moves to the lower door)* I'll go and rouse one of her women.

(The signboard creaks.)

CURTAIN



A SPRING SONG

By Robert Loveman

A BALMY hint, then from the mint
Of April comes a flood
Of dandelion riches,
Making opulent the wood;
They cluster in a fluster—
How good the grasses feel!
The Croesus Spring his gold doth fling,
The winter's hurt to heal.

The daffodils are redolent
With hope and happiness,
The jonquils beatific
In a becoming dress;
The mellow, yellow flowers
Make a fellow feel benign;
I owe no debt of vain regret—
Old Midas' store is mine.

ONE MAN TO EVERY FAMILY

By Evelyn Gill Klahr

NO doubt I could tell this story better if I hadn't been so busy at the time it all happened. You see, it was just when that window dressing craze struck Worcester, and, of course, we had to mark time, too.

We're "Bailey & Son," dad and I, and the window business fell to me, so I saw little of the Addingwood Adams drama with my own eyes. But none of our set—it's an artist set and I belong to it only by courtesy, for I'm a merchant—not one of them had a decent word to say for the woman, and everyone was fully in sympathy with Addingwood. He's always been a very decent sort of chap and he is talented and he is an Adams, so there was every reason for popular prejudice to go his way.

As for me, I didn't even know he was married until Dulcie True told me. (Dulcie does miniatures—right nice ones.) I remember how she stopped me on the street corner that day she told me.

"Tom Bailey," she said, "isn't it awful about Addingwood!"

"What's awful?" I asked.

"Why, Tom!" she cried. "You know!"

What did she think I asked for, if I knew?

"You knew at least that he was married?" she went on.

"No, I didn't," I told her, "but I'm mighty glad to hear it. Are they still in New York?"

She shook her head and couldn't say anything for a moment. "No, they are here. They came back to Addingwood's old rooms."

"Well, what's awful?" I asked again. She shook her head.

"I can't tell you, if you don't know," she answered in a hard, dry little voice—at least, I *think* it's what they call a hard, dry little voice—and then she went on down the street.

I went ahead and called on Margaret Adams. She's Addingwood's cousin, the blue-bloodedest little thoroughbred you ever saw. She froze up the minute I spoke of Addingwood. You could have reached out and broken icicles off her manner.

You can't ask things right out with Margaret, but I went right through my entire vocabulary of allusions; and that didn't get me anywhere.

So I tried plebeian fragkness.

"What's the new Mrs. Adams like?" I inquired.

"I haven't called," she told me in her snowbound voice, "so really I can't give you my impressions."

Then I hunted up Percy Sleter. He teaches Arts and Crafts, and he's the sort who would make a mystery of borrowing a light from you. All I got from Percy was a line of carefully veiled and tragic hints about Addingwood's career being ruined and his life spoiled and similar calamities.

"Can't you speak up?" I said. "Did she rob a bank? Murder her mother? Is she black? Chinese? Can't you tell me? You aren't afraid of the English language, are you?"

To which Percy replied that for Addingwood and the people who really cared for him it wasn't quite so amusing a matter as I seemed to think.

I found Addingwood himself at the club, and I will say that he was the sanest person I had struck all morning.

He made a fairly clean breast of it.

He had met her in New York—he had gone down there and opened a studio on the strength of that magazine cover he did last fall, a lean-looking woman with murder in her eye—"The Feminist," I think he called it. He met her down there at some artist dinner. The glamour of New York was in his Worcester veins, and the whole thing was done almost before he knew it: just a few late suppers, a few strolls in the park, a studio dinner, a moonlight automobile ride, a few wild words that he didn't half mean, and then it was done and he was married.

And after it was over, he awoke to the horror of knowing that he was tied to a woman who drank and smoked and aided her complexion artificially and talked like a washerwoman when she was angry. These things hadn't seemed so bad in someone you met at a studio supper, had even seemed attractive in a reckless, Bohemian sort of way; but they were a very different matter in someone who called herself Mrs. Adams.

In his miserable disillusionment he had found himself quite unable to work. His neat little income wasn't enough for two, certainly not in New York. He came back to his rooms in Worcester, because he could live more cheaply here, and because—he didn't say this, but I knew it—because he wanted the sympathy of his friends.

I confess that I felt right sorry for Addingwood, even though I realized that his suffering was more mortification than anything else.

You see, there were too many generations of Adamses behind him. And every Adams had married someone else as Adams-like as possible. It would have been a darn sight better for poor Addingwood if one of his Puritan ancestors had picked out a good-looking Indian girl, or if a later one had fallen victim to the buxom charms of the Dutch girl in his mother's kitchen, or if Addingwood's father during his days at Yale had chosen a nice New Haven waitress instead of Addingwood's cultured mother. And it was those countless generations of ancestors in Addingwood that were making the trouble now, prowling

around in his conscience and beating their breasts over his shocking marriage.

I was sorry for Addingwood, but you've got to remember that it was just the touch of paint and the cigarette between red lips that caught Addingwood's heart in the first place down there in New York.

You see, I got so much more out of his story than he told me. I saw, for instance, that before he went to New York he felt that the artistic circle in Worcester wasn't real enough for him, too tainted with provincialism and New Englandism; and he was glad to get away. Then he opened his studio in New York, and there he was, all alone! I think he almost died of loneliness, but was just too proud to come back.

Then when someone did finally notice him, there all by himself, he was pitifully grateful, so ready to be enthusiastic and to believe that all the tinsel was gold and that all the silkaine came from the looms of Arabia! Besides, the free and easy and gay cigarette-smoking women he met made the girls at home seem like dull little schoolgirls. But when marriage opened his eyes, and when he had to live with her and appear on the street with her, it was quite different. All his culture and innate refinement asserted itself, and he began to pay pretty dearly. He loathed her; he couldn't bear to have her touch him. He couldn't stay in the house with her. And he couldn't work. He was so utterly wretched that he had accomplished nothing. He poured all this misery of his heart into the ears of his sympathetic friends.

Pretty soon they began gathering together in little groups to talk it over. Everyone had an additional horror to add. She had borrowed cigarettes from Ronald Higgins, who roomed on the same floor—Percy had this from Ronald himself—she had borrowed them twice, and she had never even been introduced. Then Dulcie had been told by their landlady, Mrs. Tuttle, a good old soul who had mottoes hanging all around the place: "Blessed Are the Pure in Heart"—"The Body Was God's First Temple"—"Temperance Next to God-

liness"—maybe I haven't them word for word, but that's their style. And, moreover, Mrs. Tuttle was president of the local temperance union. Well, Mrs. Tuttle told Dulcie that the creature had ordered wine with her dinners. She had had a bottle of champagne sent in to her room from outside somewhere, in broad daylight. She had said to Miss Jennings, a gentle little spinster lady who boarded there: "I guess I'll have to touch you for a dollar." And Miss Jennings had come across with the dollar, which Addingwood had had later to borrow from Percy to refund.

Through it all Addingwood went more and more to pieces. He looked like a ghost. He couldn't sleep. He even had weeping spells. Work was out of the question for him. He was wasting his life and his youth and his talent and everything he had. Everyone agreed with everyone else that something simply must be done.

But everyone had a different notion of what that something was. Little Miss Jennings thought if some nice person took her in hand they might make a lady of her, and then why shouldn't Addingwood be perfectly satisfied and why shouldn't it all end like a fairy tale? But everyone else saw that if Addingwood loathed her there wasn't any chance for a reconciliation. So she must be shipped off by Addingwood, or, if Addingwood couldn't do it, by Addingwood's friends. But they couldn't decide how she was to be provided for afterward until she could find something to do for herself. You couldn't simply turn her adrift.

My little sister Agatha was strong for Addingwood's handing over every cent he could earn, above what was absolutely necessary to keep him alive. But Agatha isn't an artist. They explained to her that he could not be turned into a money grubber for the sake of that woman. His genius was to be protected at all costs. Dulcie suggested that Addingwood's friends provide a fund for her, so that Addingwood might wash his hands of the whole matter and put his mind on his work. Percy thought that if we provided her with a job we

should have done our share. Then finally they all agreed that nothing could be decided until the woman herself had been seen and interviewed.

Dulcie was the first to call. I heard several accounts of the call, and putting them together this is what seems to have happened: Dulcie tactfully began by telling Mrs. Addingwood Adams that she had spoiled her husband's life and made a wreck of his career, and then proceeded to have hysterics on top of that. Mrs. Addingwood Adams ordered her from the house in her washerwoman voice, and Dulcie went.

Just about this time business distractions somewhat took my attention from Addingwood. Our most important rivals, Collinghouse, Allen & Glynn, began to do stunts with their windows. There's no use talking—a window is the most important part of a store. If your window looks cheap, you draw a cheap crowd; if it's refined, you draw a refined one. But if it is stunning enough, you'll get every customer in town.

That's what Collinghouse, Allen & Glynn did. They had one window fixed up like the corner of a library. And there weren't just furniture and books in it. There was something else. It's such a foolish word that I hate to use it, but that place had *atmosphere*. It made you feel that you wanted to live in a room like that and didn't really care about living in any other. And you could fairly read the minds of the people who stood in front of that window, and see every one of them plan to do over his own library in the spring and turn the furnishing over to Collinghouse, Allen & Glynn.

Then they had another window with background draperies of plain green silk and a single green and white dress in the front center. They changed the dress and the draperies every day, and you could hardly get near it for the women.

Well, we couldn't afford to let that sort of thing go on. We, too, had to spruce up on the window business. I spent all my time trying to work out something big, and our window dresser nearly had a nervous breakdown. We gave them one window with five hun-

dred books in it. We gave them another with twenty-five advance spring models in waists and dresses. No good. They looked merely hysterical beside those windows of Collinghouse, Allen & Glynn. For those windows of theirs, the library window, the dress window and all the others, had something about them that got you going; just as a big picture gets people going and keeps them going for generation after generation. I'm only in the artistic set by courtesy; I couldn't tell a Giorgione from a De Gogorza; but I know a big thing when I see it, and I know those windows were Art.

Well, this explains why I didn't see much of Addingwood or the crowd during those days. Of course my sister Agatha kept me posted on all that happened. It seems that about this time everyone was going to see Addingwood's wife to try to find some way to fix things up for Addingwood.

Percy Sleter went, but couldn't talk about it afterward. Nice little Miss Jennings went, to see what were the prospects of turning her into a lady. Even Margaret Adams went, veiled, and with her icicle manner and her limousine. Indeed, they even got little Agatha into it. She hated to go, but she is an obliging child, so she went. Afterward she told me that the whole time she was there the poor soul kept trying to fix her waist a little neater at the belt, and at the same time keep one foot on a cigarette stump on the floor and with the other shove an old slipper under the sofa. Little Agatha escaped being ordered from the room. Few others did, but they kept going.

By and by they began not to find her at home, and Addingwood said he didn't know where she was and didn't care. There were dark rumors that she had sent for some of her old set in New York and was meeting them here.

Everyone seemed to forget that it was her set in New York that Addingwood had once been so all fired pleased to get into.

Presently they got after me. It was Dulcie who first told me that I had to go.

"In the first place, Dulcie," I an-

swered her, "it's none of my business and I'm going to keep out."

Said Dulcie: "It's the business of anyone who cares for Addingwood."

"Well," I said, "I'm fond enough of Addingwood, but that doesn't mean that I'm going to put my finger in his pie."

"Isn't Addingwood worth saving?" she challenged me. "Don't you think his talent is worth something to the world?"

"I think Addingwood draws very nicely," I told her. "But I can't see—"

She didn't let me finish. "Don't you think his friends ought to stand by him in his trouble?"

"I can't see," I said, "what earthly good I could do by making a call on his wife. She doesn't want to see me, and I don't want to see her."

"You might see," she persisted, "some way out of the dilemma that the rest of us haven't seen."

"Besides," I told her, "I haven't time."

Then Percy got after me, and Margaret and Miss Jennings and Agatha and even Addingwood.

I finally went, though I hated to, and besides, I *couldn't* afford the time. Collinghouse, Allen & Glynn had come out with a new window that very morning, a veranda window, so summery that it was sure to bring on the spring two weeks earlier, and it was up to us to do something. I went around there knowing I ought to have been at my desk. Besides, I hate to mix up in family affairs.

She let me come in—and I hadn't felt at all sure she would. But she didn't ask me to sit down—just stood with her hand on the back of a chair, all on the defensive, ready to fight if she had to.

"I'm Tom Bailey," I said.

She nodded in acknowledgment.

She was nicer-looking than I had expected. She had a nice mouth. I'm sure in my youth someone who looked like that must have filled my pockets with cookies. She was that sort.

And she may have used rouge, but I've often seen more of it. There were cigarettes on the table and a wineglass. Not even the men in my family smoke

cigarettes or drink, but, hang it all, that doesn't give them a monopoly of all the virtues.

"See here," I said, "you sit down anyhow, even if you don't want me to."

With that she sort of laughed, took a chair and nodded me to one, too. But still she kept her hand on her gun, so to speak.

"Would you mind telling me which kind you are?" she asked.

"Which!" I repeated stupidly.

"Yes," she said. "Did you come because I've broken his heart or because I've hurt his pride or wrecked his career or interfered with his getting a living? I seem to have done them all."

I told her: "It isn't any of it my business. I just came to see if I could be of any service to either of you. And if I can't, I'll go."

Some of the battle died out of her face. It was as if she stood her gun in the corner. "You almost seem— No, no, of course that's too much to expect."

"What?"

"I don't believe they grow them here, but you do almost seem like—like a human being."

"Whatever I am," I replied, "I think I'm the same species as yourself."

She gave a nice comfortable little laugh, almost to herself. "I certainly am glad to see you," she sighed. "I certainly am glad."

"Now see here," she went on briskly, "we've had a pretty bad time of it. No one seems to realize it, but it's been as bad for me as for him—here away from everyone I know, and everyone here despising me; and I'm not used to that. And I *did* care, and I thought he cared, and I could have made a man of him if he hadn't been ashamed of me. Land—do you suppose I wasn't ashamed of him? It's awful to have a husband that goes whining all the time to his friends. This can't go on. I'm going to New York."

"Oh, say!" I started to protest, but she stopped me.

"It's the only thing," she said. "I've thought it all out, and it's a sin to live with anyone who loathes you. Now Addingwood probably won't do, any

work to amount to anything for a month or so, and he's got to have something to live on, so I'll leave this with you."

She slipped off a velvet pump, took a roll of bills from it and handed the roll to me.

I guess I looked all the surprise I felt, for hadn't I heard how she touched Miss Jennings for a dollar?

"Someone had to work," she explained, "so I did, though I was just as miserable as he. I'm a window dresser."

My eyes almost popped out. I might have known it wasn't local talent!

"Collinghouse, Allen & Glynn?" I cried.

She nodded.

"I knew they couldn't do it themselves! Why didn't you come to us—Bailey & Son?"

She smiled a friendly smile. "I didn't know you then, and I came to the other place first."

"Well, you're an artist," I told her heartily.

"I am," she said quietly. "I know that. But don't artists have to earn their bread and butter, even when they have broken hearts, the same as other people do? But it's hard."

"Poor Addingwood!" I mused.

"He won't have to," she assured me. "That money will last him until he recovers."

"I wasn't thinking of that," I explained. "I said 'Poor Addingwood' because he is losing you."

"He'll find someone else," she said easily. "No girl will be able to resist him after this. This story will improve so with age. Pretty soon they'll say he married me to save me—oh, I know them! 'And she was awful,' they'll say—'ruined his life and left him after two months.' You'll see that he gets that money?"

I looked at the roll of bills.

"Why did you do this for him?" I asked.

She shrugged her shoulders and smiled that smile that made me think of the cookies of my youth. "There's got to be one man to every family," she told me.

THE SEA

By Louise Driscoll

IN you are all the little streams
That came so far to reach your breast.
You were the center of their dreams,
Where now they lie at rest.

They lie like chords across your heart,
Invisible to mortal eye,
But the wind knows them all apart,
And as he passes by

He touches them with careful hands,
He plays the harp of the great sea,
An instrument none understands
Nor loves so well as he.

II

At midnight when on land the dead arise,
Creeping through the long grass like fireflies,

The drowned come up and walk upon the sea,
And live a little while in memory.

And it is strange to see them walking there,
With shells and seaweed tangled in their hair.

I heard one speak in that immensity.
He said: "The sea does not seem strange to me,

"But as a friend that I have known for years.
Its salt is like the savor of my tears."



SOME men's idea of roughing it is to do without a manicure.

THE JOKE TOWNS OF AMERICA

By George Jayenne

AT three o'clock of the afternoon of January twenty-seventh, eighteen hundred and seventy-one, J. Proctor Knott, representative from and subsequently governor of the State of Kentucky, jumped to his feet in the House of Representatives of the United States when a land grant bill that had already passed the Senate seemed about to go through the House as well, and, by the simple expedient of cracking a nifty little joke about Duluth (toward the aggrandizement of which the measure was aimed), succeeded on the spot in putting the bill into its nightie and to sleep.

At three o'clock of any afternoon of any modern day but Sunday, one may with complete certainty stroll into any vaudeville theater in the United States and observe a gentleman decorated with comic whiskers in the act of capitalizing J. Proctor Knott's discovery as to the poignant value of a jest lodged against our more tender national commonwealths. Thus the comic vaudeville gentleman to his partner:

"What town does youse come from?"

"Kokomo."

"That ain't no town; that's a disease."

Thus again the comic vaudeville gentleman to his partner:

"Is your father still alive?"

"Naw, he lives in Philadelphia."

And thus again the comic rascal to his team mate:

"Have youse ever seen Oshkosh?"

"No. I passed through Oshkosh oncet in a train, but they was a big tree standing in front of it and I couldn't see it."

And again:

"Did youse travel far?"

"Sure; I come clean from Pittsburgh."

"Nobody ever came *clean* from Pittsburgh."

And still again:

"Have youse ever been on a desert island?"

"Naw, but I've been in Kalamazoo."

Et encore:

(Indicating a drop curtain showing an empty street scene): "My, Gus! How crowded Hoboken is today!"

Und nocheinmal:

"What's the best thing in Bawston?"

"A railroad ticket to Noo Yawrk."

And yet *nocheinmal encore:*

"What's the name of the biggest cemetery in America?"

"Brooklyn."

And how the theater reverberates with laughter; how the tummies of the cognoscenti vibrate with glee; how the mouths stretch from ear to ear in one massive, cyclopean, epic, guffaw-breeding grin! Could anything be more humorous? Could anything be more intensely, more downrightly, more absolutely without a rift in it funny? Nix! Nuttin'! Naw!

Indeed, I doubt if even that gorgeously mirth-provoking *soupeçon* of dialogue that goes: "It is so, is it not?"—"Yes, it is not," has half the intrinsic and genuine wit of the Kokomo quip. Indeed, I doubt if even that imperially ludicrous reference to the orchestra leader's bald head possesses a third of the real sheer cleverness of the Hoboken allusion. Indeed, I doubt—and I am perfectly willing to be quoted, for it is my firm conviction—if even that exquisitely facetious gem concerning the

present absence of one's wife in the country, huzzah! can match more than a quarter of sword length with that most majestically ravishing bit about Pittsburgh.

The word "vaudeville," according to the clumsy encyclopædia, is derived from the French "*van-de-Vire*"—the valley of the river Vire in Normandy, where in the fifteenth century gay old Oliver Baselin sang his roundelays and piped his rhythms. In view of the excellence of the jests of the above species that one hears in vaudeville, the derivation of the word has unquestionably been deduced with accuracy. I grant this despite the fact that, inasmuch as the German "W" has the sound of "V," I had figured out in my lewd youth that "vaudeville" came from the Teutonic interrogation "*wo-der-Will?*" which, translated freely, means, "Where is the sense?" Assuredly, however, there is too much sense in the joke about Bawston alone to permit us to go on believing even remotely in the verity of the latter hazarded deduction.

It is a common superstition among the peasant and monarchical classes of America that the three greatest national jokes are pronouncing "*au revoir*" "olive oil," the Erie Railroad and the belief that Alaska belongs to the government instead of the Messieurs Guggenheim. In the light of the tremendous fortunes that have been built up by Oscar Hammerstein, Keith and Proctor and Sullivan and Considine alone out of the inquiry "What are Yonkers?" it would seem that something is wrong somewhere in the old-time estimate. And gradually we must become persuaded that, whatever fearful misdeeds the Indians were responsible for—such as imitators of Frederick Remington, school-room recitations of "Hiawatha," the binding on the "works" edition of "The Last of the Mohicans," and the group photographs of the Carlisle football team—their atonement was ample when they bequeathed to the nation that little strip of land in Wisconsin and called it Oshkosh.

Have you ever paused to think what we should do without Oshkosh? I ask, have you? Without fair Oshkosh, what,

for instance, should we do for musical comedy libretti? Without lovely Oshkosh, what would Chicago drummers do for repartee? Without dear old Oshkosh, what should we do to while away the lonely vigil until Emil, the barber, gets through singeing the hair of the darned dude who is always ahead of us? Without Oshkosh—no *Puck*, no *Judge*. Without *Puck* and *Judge*—no patience. Without patience—no shave. Without a shave—no John Drew. Without a John Drew—no photograph on schoolgirl's dresser. Without photo on schoolgirl's dresser—no schoolgirl sentiment. Without schoolgirl sentiment—no broken hearts. Without broken hearts—no old maids. Without old maids—no Dr. Parkhurst!

And what then? Alcohol running wild in the gutters; tots in baby carriages pickled and pie-eyed; booze parlors on every corner; ladies stewed to the eyeballs; clergymen, college presidents, baseball pitchers—everybody kerflumixed. Homes broken up; daughters driven by delirious fathers into the snowstorm; mothers besieged by green cobras with violet orbs and pink wings and by mauve finnan haddies with Society Brand cutaway coats and by fire-spitting beetles that have faces like Emma Goldman, biceps like Hackenschmidt and dispositions like Lulu Glaser. The army and navy fighting against themselves in alcoholic hysteria; the nation invaded by the enemy; usucaption. And all just because we didn't have an Oshkosh!

And what, you ask, is an Oshkosh? Allow me to remove your blinders. An Oshkosh—the name is sufficient to describe as well a Kalamazoo or a Kokomo or a Kankakee—is an institution which the worldly inhabitants of the big cities are in the habit of regarding as awfully outlandish and supremely funny because the ignorant Reubens who live in it go to bed before dawn instead of hanging around the Pompeian Grillroom and paying a dollar and a quarter for fifteen cents' worth of canapé of caviar they do not want, and who are able to get out of bed in the morning without having to be assisted by a doctor, a Shure Kure

headache powder, a quart of ice water, a Swedish masseur, the smelling salts, an osteopath and an electric vibratory machine.

Other unpardonable degeneracies which the superior natives of the metropolis hold against the hayseed aborigines of an Oshkosh are wearing knitted worsted mitts in winter to keep the hands warm and comfortable instead of kid gloves to keep them cold and stylish, reading Robert Louis Stevenson instead of that up-to-date and extremely more "classy" Robert (Chambers by name), and attending the Opery House to see something by that old foggy and back number Shakespeare instead of enjoying Harry B. Smith from a mezzanine box with a real palm in it.

The plain truth about the folk in an Oshkosh is that they are bourgeois. With the word "bourgeois" the big-city man and woman grandiosely settle the case for once and all. That is all there is to it. The other people are bourgeois! That the big-city soul pronounces the epithet "beerjoys" does not in the least diminish its slaying powers. The word in a city being's teeth carries with it the sound of the falling guillotine blade, the springing of the scaffold's trap, the murderous sizzling of the electric current, the guzzling of the carbolic acid, the turning on of the gas. Indeed, to hear a New Yorker hurl the word "bourgeois" against the people of an Oshkosh is almost as spectacular as to hear a German slay American beer with the words "*verdamme Pfütze*," to hear a Frenchman lay low American-cooked sole with the phrase "*vil gâchis*," to hear a Swede dispatch an American who essays to prepare onions to his taste with the noun "*skomakare*" or to hear a Chinese massacre the American manner of boiling rice at one fell and eaglish swoop with the characterization "*tsi yen su sin hop*."

The joke towns of the United States are divided into two classes: the national joke towns, such as Peoria, Kalamazoo, Oshkosh, et cetera; and the sectional joke towns, such as Camden, N. J. (from the Philadelphia point of view), Ashtabula, O. (from the Cleveland way

of looking at it), Sheboygan, Wis. (from the Milwaukee angle), Ypsilanti, Mich. (from the Detroit eye), St. Joe, Mo. (from the St. Louis attitude), Rochester, N. Y. (from the Buffalo standpoint), Buffalo, N. Y. (from the Rochester standpoint) and so on. To render this latter catalogue all-embracing, one need but refer to the nearest atlas. Every city, town, village and water tank in America thinks that the perfectly innocent, decent and respectable community or water tank situated next to it is a Great Joke because the adjacent community or water tank doesn't happen to have tiled floors in its post office and because Lillian Lorraine hasn't played there in the last two years. One presumes that this attitude is much the same as that affected by neighbors toward each other's children and kitchen cleanliness, by non-college men toward college graduates who are earning two dollars a week less than they are, by married women toward more youthful good-lookers who at the moment are contiguous to their meal tickets, and by George M. Cohan toward England, Germany, France, Russia, Japan, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Italy, China and South Africa all rolled together it's a grand old flag!

Let us penetrate briefly into the case of the sectional joke town, say, New York and Jersey City, or Philadelphia and Camden. One or two examples will serve to remove the mask of mystery from the problem in its entirety. New York cannot resist a titter at the very thought of Jersey City. It must not be believed, however, that this titter is an unthinking, unwarranted titter; it must not be believed that this titter is an ignorant titter, the sort of ignorant titter, for example, that always arises at present when a man with a lucid coco ventures the opinion that the physical structure of the female offers the strongest and most preponderating negative answer to Votes for Women. New York has good reason for its titter at Jersey City. Philadelphia has good reason for its titter at Camden. Let us attend the justification. In the first place, concerning ourselves with the former case,

is not New York much larger than Jersey City?

And is not size everything? Certainly a piano mover weighing two hundred and sixty-nine pounds or a garbage can juggler tipping the beam to a lusty three hundred and twelve is the superior of a one-hundred-and-thirty-six-pound Disraeli, or a one-hundred-and-twenty-nine-pound Napoleon, or a ninety-eight-pound Danny Maher or a mere one-hundred-and-twenty-pound J. M. Barrie! Certainly a good, chubby, all-meat four-hundred-and-eight-pound bouncer at the portal of a hall of dance or a mill of gin has a lot of things on a mere squirt of a Carnegie or a mere pigmy of a Kurokil And look you how much bigger Marie Dressler is than Sarah Bernhardt! Or, in another direction, how much bigger Arnold Bennett's head is than Arnold Bennett!

New York may well and righteously giggle at little Jersey City. In Jersey City, the population actually lives in houses—imagine!—instead of in flats bounded on the north window by the Elevated, on the east window by a brunette court, on the west by no window at all and on the south by an entrancing view of the back wall of another flat disguised under the alias of Hetherblossom Hall—or something elegant like that. In Jersey City, you can't get a highball after midnight. Think of that! In Jersey City, I repeat, you can't get a highball after midnight! Imagine having to go six whole hours—from midnight until six in the morning—without a highball! In Jersey City, it is so quiet you can hear the crickets. Isn't that funny? A jay town! Think of going to sleep at night to the chip-chip-chip of crickets instead of to the pacific sound of the elevator out in the hallway or the piano across the court. In Jersey City, there isn't a restaurant that is called a lobster palace; there isn't a cabaret show from one end of the town to the other; there aren't any hat check boys; the headwaiters are crude and vulgar enough to give you a table if you wish one; nobody gives a darn whether Mrs. Vanderbilt wore *crêpe de Chine* or *charmeuse* or nothing at all last night; nobody

gives a hang whether Ludwig Woxleslopper wears a white waistcoat with his dinner jacket or whether he has a dinner jacket or—having one—whether he calls it a "Tuxedo." Ha, ha, ha! Mirth and merriment!

In Camden, things are much the same. In Camden, there isn't a Bellevue-Stratford tea room where the natives can sit around in the afternoon for the price of a chocolate éclair and imagine they're in society. In Camden, there is no political ring to tear up Market Street every second Tuesday and, consequently, Camden doesn't show any signs of activity and progress. In Camden, there is no Drexel-Biddle to fight his way to the middleweight self-advertising championship of the world; there is no Café L'Aiglon where the inhabitants are cajoled into imagining that they are "metropolitan" by the insertion in the menu of a colored picture showing a naughty blonde raising her right leg against an old boy's silk hat, and by the rendition of the orchestra, at ten-minute intervals, of a song called "Little Old New York's a Great and Grand Old Burg." In Camden, furthermore, there is no annual Assembly stomach-warmer, so that it is absolutely impossible for the residents to tell which of them are better than the rest. And in Camden there is no newspaper published by Frank A. Munsey!

Is it not natural, therefore, that Philadelphia should laugh at Camden even as New York should laugh at what its polyglot connoisseurs pronounce variously as Choisey City, Jairzey Seety, Jurrusy Sitty and J'sy C'ty? The g. k. chesterton—or I should say, in simpler synonym, the echo, answers: The affirmative wins.

It is an axiom of human nature that we invariably laugh at things which we do not understand, and which are, therefore, all wrong. Thus the man who waxes mellow and tearful at the sound of "When the Sands of the Desert Grow Cold, My Dear, Then Will I Grow Cold Toward Thee" is the man who will insist in noble oaths that Mozart's G minor symphony is nothing more than a lot of musical instruments gone crazy,

and that "there ain't nuttin' to that classical stuff anyhow." Thus the man who stands hat in hand and silent before a beef extract calendar showing a Howard Chandler Gibson girl in a scene entitled "Her Absent Sweetheart"—you know, white dress, moonlight, sympathetic dog next to chair and all that sort o' thing—is the same man who thinks that a lot of blamed art hypocrites are responsible for the gush over "them smeers by Lee Nardo Dwinsi." Thus the bookworm who buries his enthusiastic proboscis in the volumes of Harold Bell Wright and the Baroness Orczy is the same individual who doesn't really care for George Moore because the print in his books is too small and you have to cut the leaves yourself. And thus the fellow who memorizes Robert Service's verse—"blood, cud, sweat, get, gore, sore, etc."—and who recites it at frequent intervals to illustrate his own stalwart feelings toward this thing called life, is the same little boy who would have read some of Dante's stuff, you know, but it's so infernally long—and anyway it lacks the rugged strength of the Kipling school.

"We cannot understand what we do not love"—Elisée Reclus. "We cannot love what we do not understand"—George Jean Nathan. The New Yorker does not understand, neither does he love, Jersey City. Philadelphia and Camden—the same.

Just as we invariably fail to understand why the other man brushes his hair differently from the way we brush ours—just as we are unable to comprehend what in the world Rudolph Rausmitten could possibly have seen in the girl he married, when she wasn't our type at all—just as we cannot negotiate why people seek health at Atlantic City—just so can we not understand the *modus vivendi* of the littler town next door to us. We do not joke about that town—or about the national joke towns—flippantly, lightly, meaninglessly. Down in our hearts we believe that all the towns at which we hurl our chuckles are, in actuality, joke towns.

It is not at all unlikely, of course, that the names of these towns have operated

in an under-the-conscience manner toward bequeathing this viewpoint. The name of Hackensack, as it comes into contact with the tympanum, is certainly not deeply symptomatic of frock coats, open plumbing, traffic policemen and the like. Nor is the name of Tombstone, Arizona—nor are the names of Oshkosh and Sioux Falls and Oswego and Passaic and the gaudy rest o' them. The question, "What's in a name?" (which is not second in national popularity even to that other celebrated question, "Do you think Maxine Elliott's good looking?") may here be answered thus: that when it is the name of a joke town you will frequently find that what is in it is a repetition of sounds. For instance: the *ch-ch* in Mauch Chunk, the *cin-cin* in Cincinnati, the *ka-ka* in Kankakee, the *ko-ko* in Kokomo, the *osh-osh* in Oshkosh, the *ack-ack* in Hackensack, the *ho-ho* in Hohokus, the *ph-ph* in Philadelphia, the *walla-walla* in Walla Walla, the *k-k* in Keokuk, the *cr-cr* in Cripple Creek, etc. Although it is perfectly impossible (even for me) to make this curious circumstance prove anything, it may be ventured wildly that possibly the quick repetition of these sounds exercises the jest-provoking effect on the ear. A repetition of like sounds in a name always carries something of a ludicrous ring with it, and the name (together with the individual or institution which it adorns) so becomes invested with an allied and in-eradicable, ridiculous air. Attend our little experiment. Are you ready? Then lend your ears closely and hearken: Gatti Casazza! — Alfalfa!! — Götterdämmerung!!!—The *ing-ing* sound in I'm-not-drinking!!!! (Also on general principles, and as exceptions proving the rule—Anthony Comstock, Samuel Gompers, James Gordon Bennett and Mary Garden.)

Observe the effect? Recall the risibility which the mention of these persons, objects and institutions has always induced in one? The double sound and the possible reason for the joke town being regarded as a joke town may, therefore, frequently be associated. There may, indeed, be an excellent psy-

chological basis for the quip instinct encouraged and stimulated by such repeated sounds as the *osh-osh* in Oshkosh. I wager Professor Hyslop or Doctor Morton Prince could invent a couple of experimenting machines and prove it to you on the spot. Of course a psychologist might have a little more difficulty in doing so—but that is another matter.

The French physicist, P. J. G. Cabanis, said that to form a just idea of the operations from which thought results, we must consider the brain as a particular organ intended for its special production; just as the stomach and intestines effect digestion, the liver filters the bile, and the parotids and maxillary and sublingual glands prepare the salivary fluids. Inasmuch as there is no brain in such beings as regard Kokomo, Galipolis, etc., as being overpoweringly funny, a purely psychological analysis of the problem becomes a bit complicated. Unscientifically, however, repetition of the same sound is usually possessed of an amusing quality or an amused significance. The ejaculated sound "Ha!" signifies scornful doubt; the repeated sound "Ha-ha" signifies amusement. The sound "Goo" signifies nothing more than something that is sticky and mushy; the repeated sound "Goo-goo" signifies either a baby or an old ass who is trying to flirt with the telephone girl—both being amusing by virtue of their helpless imbecility. The sound of "raw" signifies something underdone, uncooked; the double sound "Raw-Raw" signifies the same thing, but just the same you will not deny that college students are more amusing than oysters or Hamburg steak. The ejaculated "Ah" signifies admiration and delight; the duplicated sound "Ah-ah" signifies that you have a sore throat and are obliging the doctor, which is always funny—to the doctor. The sound "aye" signifies you are voting in the affirmative; the double sound "aye-aye"—particularly if topped off with a "sir"—will always set a musical comedy audience a-roaring when put in the mouth of a sailor with red hair. And the illustrations might be carried on indefinitely.

The joke town is not only a source of repartee for society people, college professors of English, politicians and brokers. Intelligent people as well resort to the joke town once in a while as the one infallible medium of laugh-provoking persiflage. Richard Harding Davis in "The Galloper" indulges himself in the following bit of dialogue:

Mrs. Schwartz?

Yes, she's a widow, widow of Schwartz, the brewer. He left her two breweries and a department store in Newark. And I promised her if she'd only let me go to this war, I'd marry her and settle down—in Newark!

The italics and exclamation point are Mr. Davis's own.

Oscar Wilde, in the first act of "A Woman of No Importance" (unless memory coquettes with me), looked across the sea, saw Chicago and "got a laugh" out of it. Washington Irving, in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," joke-towns thus of Tarrytown, New York: "The name was given it by the good housewives of the adjacent country from the inveterate propensity of their husbands to linger about the village tavern on market days." Arnold Bennett, on his last sojourn in these parts, amused Arnold Bennett vastly with merry jests directed at Brooklyn and the like. George Bernard Shaw, via the cable, has twice pronged two of our tender communities with a quip when those communities had failed to jump atop their orchestra chairs and scream "Bravo" at his plays. George M. Cohan, who is a perfectly intelligent young man—despite the disinclination of certain souls to regard him as such, on the grounds that he does not know that it was M. Verworn who edited "Psychophysiologische Protistenstudien" and that the vernier chronoscope is a reaction-time apparatus accurate to one-fiftieth of a second—has made a great deal of his fortune out of a series of jokes leveled at New Rochelle and grouped together under the title "Forty-five Minutes from Broadway"—to say nothing of the stack of rupees he has achieved out of jests directed at Providence, R. I. And these gentlemen are but a handful of the massive phalanx!

Twilight—natural twilight of a tired sun, not the noonday city twilight of smoke and soot and bricky shadows—is descending on Main Street. The little shops one by one are locking their doors for the day, and from them come men with smiles on their faces and peace in their souls. "Hello, Joe," they greet the town's lonely cop—lonely because he hasn't been called on to make an arrest since that day, two years ago, when the New York police commissioner had telegraphed on to him to look out for a couple of metropolitan police captains who had killed a Broadway saloon keeper because he held out twenty cents on their monthly graft allowance. And "How do, Al," "How do, Bill," "How do, Ed," the friendly cop greets them in return. Up three blocks to Maple Street, Cedar Street and Pine Street the footsteps lead, and at many wooden fence gates healthy little kids are hopping up and down excitedly and laughing and waiting for papa. On the steps of the porches, clear-eyed, life-filled women scan the thitherward flagstones impatiently. A rare aroma of roast beef and browned potatoes floats out on the evening air, and the erstwhile fragrant fuchsias in the front yards hang their heads in shame. "Here he comes! Here he comes! Here's papa, mamma!" A leap into opened arms, a kiss, a hug. Another kiss for her who has been wait-

ing there on the porch. "Gee, it's good to be home again, Mary!"

This is the Joke Town of America.

Six o'clock. Subway jammed. "Stop pushing there, or I'll hand you one on the mug!" Noise. More noise. Rush. More noise. "Get off my feet, you! Can't you look where you're going?" "Hey there, you guys stop your shovin' or I'll pinch the bot' of youse. None of that rowdy stuff goes wit' me!" "Hundred and Sixty-fifth Street! A tall, gloomy, damp, flat building. "Let me off at the twelfth floor, please." "Hello, Alys, what's up?" "The electric lights aren't working and the janitor says the steam pipes are out of order and it's the maid's day out." "Rotten luck; I felt like staying home tonight. I've been working so hard at the office all day." "But you promised you'd take me to the theater, Edwin, and to a cabaret show afterward. We never go anywhere or do anything like other people!" "All right, don't pout, Alys; I'll take you." "Oh, Edwin, you're just a dear! And some day, some day I may decide to let you have your wish." "Thank you, dearest, because I do wish we might have a baby!"

And this the city that guffaws at Winnebago and that looks on Keokuk as One Big Laugh!



DEAD DREAMS

By Blanche Shoemaker Wagstaff

I HAVE made for your face a nest of roses,
And hid you far
In my heart where the moon's white soul reposes
Wreathed in a star.

I have made for your love a beautiful home of flowers,
And o'er you shed
The deathless murmur of birds in perfumed bowers
Where our dreams lie dead.

THE WOMAN-AT-ARMS

By Victor Starbuck

I RIDE to a tourney with sordid things;
They grant no quarter, but what care I?
My casque is crested with iron wings,
And love, for a sword, at my stirrup swings,
And shrill in my ear Truth's trumpet sings:
"Though they slay you, you shall not die!"
I have bartered and begged, I have cheated and lied;
But now, however the battle betide,
Uncowed by the clamor, I ride, ride, ride!

Who will may splinter the shopmen's panes:
Such deeds as these be no deeds of mine.
Not by tumult nor wrong do I measure my gains,
But where gentleness triumphs and violence wanes,
With foot in the stirrup and hand on the reins
You may see my buckler shine.
I have been wanton and queen and bride,
I have veiled my soul for my body's pride,
Now, mighty in armor, I ride, ride, ride!

I ride to the battle with lust and greed.
Why marvel ye then at a woman in arms?
I am sprung from the loins of a martial breed—
Heir to the lances at Runnymede,
Cromwell's courage and Ireton's speed
And Yorktown's blood-soaked farms.
Mother o' God that was crucified,
Mother o' men that have dreamed and died—
Like the sons I have borne, I will ride, ride, ride!

I ride to the battle for children's wrongs;
For the goal that is barred by the lances' gleam.
Flame springs in the heart that yearns and longs,
And a faith to conquer the mocking throngs—
There's a ring of swords in my cradle songs;
Spears flash through my brooding dream.
I who have wept for the life denied,
Who have quenched the flame that I could not hide—
It is done! Henceforth I will ride, ride, ride!

A MENIAL

By Louis Livingston

"All men are created equal." As a political theory this is excellent. As a matter of everyday practice, it carries no weight whatever. America, in spite of its vaunted liberty, is full of the spirit of caste; and this "thriller" shows to what lengths it may be carried. Mr. Livingston is a new writer and this is his first story.

THE Senator's daughter had not yet recovered consciousness, but her brain was working as in a turbulent dream, and her eyes were open and staring, and seeing things in a vague sort of half-understanding way. She was quite still—had not moved a muscle of her body since she had been catapulted from the automobile to her present position, where she lay, huddled up in a heap, amidst dried autumn leaves and coarse, dead grass, by the side of a narrow road. It was a lonely spot on the Senator's country estate; a back road leading through a patch of woods, not far from the house, yet isolated and little used.

The girl appeared to be occupied in idle contemplation of the shocking scene that stretched before her glazed, uncomprehending eyes. There at the foot of a gigantic oak lay the remains of her father's new touring car, looking for all the world as if it had become involved with the tree in a deadly fight to the finish. It was plainly evident that it had been the aggressor, and that it had been repulsed and badly worsted. The tree had suffered but a trifling loss—a few patches of bark—while the automobile, with one wheel gone, rested on its side in complete disorder.

And, she mused, it was by all odds the best car that the family owned, or ever had owned. It was only two weeks old and had cost seven thousand dol-

lars. Yet, come to think of it, seven thousand dollars was to father by no means a forbidding sum. Recently he had cheerfully paid considerably more than that for her beautiful pearl necklace, his gift on the double occasion of her birthday and coming-out party. Father could buy another automobile. But he must order one equally good, or Paul would be inconsolable.

Paul had been quite mad about the new machine. He liked it better than any other he had ever driven. He said he would care for it so conscientiously that it would last for years and improve with age. But he had failed to figure on the possibility of a mishap, such as the foolhardy fight with the tree.

She had experienced one real ride in fast time, however; and the try-out had conclusively established the merits of the new motor. One day, when nobody was the wiser, they had opened it up, she and Paul, to seventy-two miles an hour by the new speedometer. But she had not slipped out from the garage alone with Paul on this particular drive. The Senator had taken charge of the present expedition.

The family had planned to close the country house on the following day, preparatory to moving into their Washington home for the winter, and the Senator had wished to cast a final glance over several improvements that were being made on his place, and to pay

two or three calls on nearby neighbors. So he had ordered up the new car soon after breakfast and bade his daughter accompany him. His wife was busy in her garden, so the girl took the seat in the tonneau alongside the Senator that was usually occupied by her mother. With Paul at the wheel, they were soon well on their way along the carefully kept private roads of the extensive estate. Then had come the crash. Strangely enough, it had been heard by no one.

The girl's undiscerning eyes fluttered away from the mangled wreckage and fell upon the prostrate forms of the two men. They seemed to be sleeping peacefully enough, although Paul's position looked none too comfortable, while one of her father's legs was bent beneath him in a most peculiar manner. What good-looking men they were, both of them, although of strictly opposite types. Her father had always been considered conspicuously handsome. She suspected, however, that his appearance might have attracted less notice had he not consistently bestowed the strictest attention to the very last detail of his attire. Though short and slight, he had an excellent figure, and dressed perfectly. What would Paul be like with such advantages!

Her father's iron gray hair was one of his most striking characteristics. Set off by a certain solemnity, a certain severity of expression and manner, it gave him a dignified and impressive air. He was forceful and peremptory toward all with whom he came in contact, and was held in awe by many. But not by his daughter. She never displayed lack of respect for his austere authority, and he never suspected that she often cherished private reservations. When she secretly rebelled at an injunction or prohibition, her father would be none the less in the dark than her trusting mother. They believed implicitly in the beautiful innocence and simplicity of the young girl, their only child. And she, for her part, had considerable affection for her parents, but hesitated not at all at the occasional necessity of pulling the wool over their adoring eyes. Sometimes she even felt

a sensation of sly amusement at their absolute ignorance of the real life and character of their own flesh and blood.

The unseeing gaze of the girl dwelt heavily on Paul. He lay eighteen or twenty feet from her father, crumpled up in an ungainly heap. Poor soul—what an awkward position! His legs were actually higher than his head. His hat was gone, but she did not object to that, as it was a comfort once in a while to see him out in the open with at least one detail missing of that hateful, demeaning uniform.

His hair was all tousled, his splendid, fair hair. Nobody had finer hair than Paul's, nor finer teeth, nor finer eyes, nor a finer physique. Yet, with all his physical attributes, this boy of the people was also endowed with mentality that was replete with splendid possibilities. Since, at her instance, he had taken to reading good books and trying seriously to educate himself, his improvement had been wonderful. For a long time he had avoided the contaminating influence of association with his confrères, and spent many of his free hours in solitary study.

Her recent absence at the seashore had caused her many pangs. She had missed Paul intensely. But the separation had not been entirely devoid of compensation. Daily she had driven—alone when possible, otherwise with some youthful companions—to the post office for his morning letter, and had then had reason to delight in the glowing evidences of his progress. The summer before he had written like a boy; but this year his letters, full of feeling, intelligence and humor, had been truly the work of a man.

Dreamingly she recalled the occasions when one or another of her girl friends happened to recommend to her a book that had thrilled their shallow imaginations—some new book, as a rule, of the rich, rapid and racy type—and how difficult it had been for her, at these moments, to suppress a derisive smile! Her days of enjoyment of light modern novels had long since passed. They were all based on love stories. And how petty seemed the fabricated affairs of

these fictitious characters when compared to the big, beautiful, tormenting, terrible life that she and Paul were living!

At length the busy, disordered brain began to clear. The young woman became partially sensible to her physical discomforts. Her gloved hand pressed one, then another spot on her aching body, remaining longest on one of her ankles. She was awaking to a realization of her injuries. Groaning with the effort, she struggled into a sitting position. She looked around; at first dazedly, then comprehendingly. Shrinking from the sight that met her eyes, she screamed in terror. The air became alive with her shrieks. She got herself to her feet, and shouted to the unconscious men: "Paul! Father! Paul!" She staggered from one to the other, standing for a moment over each, constantly calling their names and moaning to herself. She waved her arms in the air, pounded her sides, clutched at her hair. She prayed with distracted fervor. She called on God—remembered at this moment—for help and for mercy.

She reeled toward her father, sank at his side, and implored him to open his eyes and speak. His face was ghastly, but she saw that he was breathing, that he was not dead. She went to Paul. His face was nearly as white as her father's. And he was very quiet. She was terrified.

Paul's chest was rising and falling, softly but visibly. She knew that he, too, was alive; but how badly hurt he might be she trembled to think. There were no outward signs of injury.

He wore no overcoat, only his tweed livery. Not conscious of her actions, she took off her speckled fur coat and placed it over his twisted body, leaving herself to withstand the cold air dressed in a light autumn suit. Then she leaned down and grasped the coat again and dropped it aside on the grass. She sank down, sobbing and groaning, beside the chauffeur. She straightened out his hunched-up arms and legs. She unbuttoned his waistcoat, unfastened his collar and neckband, untied his tie. She gathered him in her arms, laid his head

against her breast, rubbed his hands, stroked his forehead, ran her fingers through his hair; the while weeping and crying, "Paul! Paul! Paul!"

She thought that she had heard her father move. She raised herself and went to him. There was no change. Sight of the grim, white face caused her to shudder anew. She noticed that one of his legs was doubled up beneath his body. With great difficulty she released it, unconscious of its disjointed limpness, but noticing the gasping sigh, as of relief, that simultaneously escaped his lips. The faint sound startled her; quickly she turned to his face; but he was apparently as insensible as before.

She looked at Paul, lying stark and still, and wondered if there were anything else that she might do. She could think of nothing. She ought to go for help. But would she be able to walk even as far as to within shouting distance of the house? She was afraid not. But she must! Somehow, she must! Her ankle hurt her terribly. Her body was covered with bruises. She felt piteously helpless, and broke into a fresh outburst of weeping.

Suddenly she appeared to be seized by a new thought. Her entire attitude changed. Her tears dried on her face, as if frozen. The heavy, sodden expression was transformed in a twinkling to one of alert alarm. The eyes, swollen and shrunk by grief, took on a look that bespoke activity. She straightened up, turned her head toward Paul, then hobbled to him as fast as her wounds would allow and threw herself on her knees at his side.

At this moment the Senator recovered consciousness. His eyes opened; he stared around him. With his face distorted in pain he made as if to speak; but no sound came. He was startled by his daughter's actions. He lay back and watched.

She was evidently searching the chauffeur's pockets. Her hands ran in and out of his clothes. She drew forth a number of letters and rapidly scanned the handwriting on each. Some she dropped in her lap; the others—the ones she wanted—she crunched, as she came

to them, into a pocket of her own coat. She replaced the undesired ones.

Apparently much relieved, she was about to rise. Then another thought struck her, and again she commenced a search. This time she drew forth a gold watch and set about to open it. She inserted her nail in the aperture of the case and pressed at it and picked at it in frantic haste. Each time that her nail slipped there came a sharp cry of impatience; but at length her efforts were successful; a tiny photograph dropped in her lap. She picked it up and thrust it deep in the hidden recesses of her waist. She put back the watch. Then she began to talk to the chauffeur.

"Paul," she murmured, "Paul, wake up and speak to me. It is Bunny, your Bunny, Bunny who loves you."

Then she kissed him—kissed him on the eyelids, on the lips. She covered the inanimate form with her overcoat and stood up. Her father closed his eyes.

He heard her sigh and talk to herself inaudibly, then come and stand over him. He knew that her gaze was upon him, but in spite of the tempest that raged within he suffered not a muscle to quiver in his ashen countenance. Then she limped off, and was gone. She had set out for help.

He opened his eyes. He tried to rise, but fell back, shivering with pain. His hand went to his left leg. It was broken. He groaned in agony and impotent rage. For a moment, with gritted teeth ground together, with livid lips sealed and set, with the flash of blood in his distended eyes, he lay and glared at the chauffeur. Again he made an effort to get up, and again failed. He leaned toward the insensible man, as if trying to reach over the distance of three or four times his length which separated them. He stretched out his arms, and fell forward on his face. He seized a tuft of withered grass and jerked it out by the roots. His fingers, in search of something substantial to fasten upon, fluttered this way and that over the hard, scraggy ground. He found a frozen furrow and gripped it. It held. He pulled himself a yard or more. Other similar efforts

failing, he took to drawing his knee up and back, up and back, and shooting his toe along the ground, blindly feeling for a foothold by which to force his way ahead. The expression of his face and the movements of his arms and leg were like those of a man, ignorant of the art of swimming, who had been thrown into the sea by an enemy and was trying to flounder back to shore. His breathing was labored and lustful, like the panting of a foxhound mad for his prey.

His heavy overcoat greatly increased his difficulties. His uninjured leg constantly became entangled in the lining. But he was not conscious of this impediment, nor of his frightful pain. Governed only by one desperate determination, he fought his way ahead, inches at a time. His eyes never wavered from the object of his passion. The nearer he got the more savagely they glared. His mouth was opened wide, and his chin trembled; his head shook. His bursting breath blew in and out. The last few feet were passed in frenzied crawls. He reached out—and caught the bottom of his daughter's leopard skin coat. He pulled it to him and cast it aside. Gurgling oaths and horrible imprecations, he seized a booted foot. He tugged and dragged himself to the side of the other, and lay by him lengthwise.

He reached for the head, and struck the senseless man one and another and another feeble, ferocious blow full in the face. Then he drew himself up on his victim's chest and drove his fingers into the thick throat. He pinched and squeezed with maniacal satisfaction. First with one hand, then with the other, then with both, he maintained a deadly grip. The man's lids quivered. His eyes flickered open—and stayed open. For an instant they seemed to see. Then gradually they grew glassy. The face commenced to change color. The vicious clutch relaxed. The aching fingers had finished their work.

The Senator's daughter, judging by ordinary conditions, had not far to go: not more than half a mile. The way led through a deep thicket of woods along a

narrow, winding lane that seemed lonely and secluded, until it suddenly opened on an immense clearing where stood the great house and its companion buildings. The girl had in mind—her only concrete thought—the flower garden. That was where her mother had been, and might still be. The flower garden lay between the house and garage, slightly nearer than either. It was her goal.

But her progress was painful and slow. She was bruised and stiff. Each time that she put her weight on her left foot she whimpered in pain. Her ankle was severely sprained. Every little while, when she was forced to stop and rest, she screamed for help, only to have her cries smothered in the trees or carried back by the wind. She limped and hobbled along, and with thumping heart and fevered brain, wondered what was going to happen.

It was a blessing that she had thought of the photograph and letters. Were they to take Paul to his room and undress him, there would be a possibility of discovery, calamity. The letters were signed with her pet name, the name that he loved to call her by, but were in her well known handwriting, which somebody would be sure to recognize. How dreadful of him to preserve the letters, to carry them about with him! By the way in which he had remembered and repeated so many of her thoughts sent back to him from the seaside, she had suspected, in spite of his merry denials, that he had disregarded her injunctions as to the precaution of destroying letters. But it was a sign of his love!

And the photograph—a laughing snapshot taken in her bathing suit. It was the only picture he could have of her—a little one, cut down to fit in his watch. She need not have been so frightened about that. Nobody would be apt to open his watch. Except if he were to die! Oh, God! Could it be possible that Paul might die? What could she do? Aside from anything else, how could she go on, day after day, if she were in one world, Paul in another? She stopped at the roadside and shuddered with dread. Then she went on, telling her-

self that her lover was not going to die, that it was impossible, that God could not be so cruel.

Besides, he had been breathing quietly and regularly when she left him. He had been merely rendered unconscious, like herself, and would recover in the same way. It was naturally taking him longer because of his heaviness and the consequently greater shock of his fall.

But suppose he had been internally injured, as she had read of in cases of automobile accidents, by being thrown against the steering wheel before the car toppled over! Agitated by dire thoughts one moment, and comforted by consoling ones the next, the girl dragged on until she saw that she was not far from the end of the wooded road, whereupon she set up a series of loud cries for help. At length they were heard.

As she limped into the open, her mother, followed by a gardener, was in sight, running in her direction. She sank on the grass. Long before she could understand the words, she heard her mother's frightened voice.

"Daughter, daughter!" shrieked the Senator's wife, as she drew within earshot. "What has happened? Your father hasn't been killed?"

"No—they are unconscious."

"Where? What happened?"

"We had a blowout—just this side of the old cabin—Paul couldn't keep the car on the road—we hit a tree—all thrown out."

"Is your father badly hurt? Oh, God! Oh, God!"

"I don't know. No—I don't think so. Try to keep calm, mother."

"I will, I will. How are you? Are you all right?"

"Yes; I have a bad ankle, that's all."

"Nothing else? Are you sure? Your father—are you sure he is all right?"

"He was knocked unconscious—we all were—I came to sooner."

"What is to be done? We must get a doctor—there is no one in the stable or garage. James, you can run the little car?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well, get Dr. Fisher as fast as you

can. Don't stop to say a word to anybody."

And the man was off at a run.

"Daughter, dear, I will go on—you go to the house. Oh, I am so frightened! I have always been afraid that something like this would happen. Those terrible automobiles!"

"It will all come out right, mother," said the girl, still sitting on the ground. "Please don't be excited."

"Let me help you up, dear. Oh, you look dreadfully!" cried the older woman. "Are you sure you are not hurt? Go to the house and get your ankle bathed, and have them telephone for another doctor to come and take care of you."

"Yes, I will," replied the girl. "But please don't worry about me. Do go on—it will take you only a few minutes to walk there."

After more hurried exclamations and admonitions, the Senator's wife started to go to him; at first running, then walking, then running again. Her daughter watched her until she was hidden by the trees. Then, with a heavy sigh, she rose to her feet and followed.

The deed done, the Senator had fallen back on the grass, where he remained for a long time inert, his eyes raised to the sky, his intellect questioning his God. Spent by nervous and physical exhaustion, and racked by paralyzing pain, he fought against collapse. Should he succumb, several lives would be blasted. He prayed for the strength to save innocent and guilty alike from paying the toll of sin. Evidence of his act must be eradicated.

He turned to the dead man, and fingering the open lids, contrived to shield partly from sight the glazed and staring eyes. Laboriously he set himself to the ugly task of readjusting the linen collar and retying the necktie, thus hiding the impressions of his guilty fingers. He drew his daughter's coat completely over the corpse, and turned away in shivering relief. He looked at the worn spot in the tangled grass to which he must return, and, steeling himself against his increasing weakness, lurched forward and pushed on for the

first step of the way. But it was the only headway that he made. Strong as was his will and his purpose, the frenzy had passed and his mind was now acutely conscious of the convulsive shafts of pain that shot through his crippled frame. The fractured leg made every effort an agony. After a few futile attempts he lay still, his feet turned toward those of his victim close by. He could combat nature no further.

He heard a voice calling through the woods. It was his wife, crying his name. In a few moments she was weeping at his side. He heard himself request her to drag him away. She protested, and begged him again and again for assurance that he was not seriously hurt. He seemed not to hear her, and repeated his request. Not understanding, nor trying to, only anxious to serve her stricken husband, she bravely helped him to the spot where she supposed he thought that he would rest more comfortably.

Once there, he was able, in a dreamy, distraught manner, to give a few monosyllabic replies to her more urgent and emphatic questions. Thus she learned that the chauffeur had broken his neck, and that her husband had been painfully but not fatally injured. After gleaning these facts she observed the silence that he dumbly solicited, and impatiently awaited the arrival of the doctor. But her daughter got there first.

When the girl had gained her feet and made the start to follow her mother she perceived that her short rest on the grass had done her no good. Her bruised body had grown stiffer and the swollen ankle more painful. She knew that she ought to direct her steps to the house, but an overpowering desire to return to the scene of the smash-up ruthlessly fascinated her into casting precaution aside and reassuming the arduous trip through the woods. It would have been impossible for her to go home and there quietly await the news. She was mad to know what had happened in her absence. Paul would be up on his feet, she was sure, probably commenting upon the perpetual treachery of tires. Then would come an opportunity for a crown-

ing display—to each other—of their remarkable powers of self-possession. They had always prided themselves on their ability to disguise, when not alone, by studiously suppressing all signs of self-consciousness, their excited sense of each other's presence. Their training in this direction would stand them in good stead today. Paul would flash to her a quick, sympathetic, warning look, and thereafter whatever words might pass between them would be perfunctory.

And she felt sure that her father would also be up and around. He would, in all likelihood, be discussing the whys and wherefores of the catastrophe. She only hoped that he would in no way hold Paul responsible. That was hardly to be feared, however, as the Senator had always thought the world of Paul. He had a habit of ungraciously commiserating with less fortunate people who sometimes experienced trouble with their motors by dilating upon the virtues of his own chauffeur—a wonderful mechanic, and the most expert and careful of drivers, whose cars were always in perfect order. He was enthusiastic about Paul, and proud of him—proud of him as of all his possessions, great and small. He was proud of his wife, a handsome woman; proud of his daughter, a fine girl; proud of his social position, second to none; proud of his eminence and power in the councils of his party; of his city house, country place, carriages, automobiles and cook. He invariably observed Paul's driving closely and was pleased with him in the same way that he might be with his chef for preparing excellent salad dressings. Paul was a good man in his capacity, in the eyes of his employer; but a servant, none the less.

He often expressed this estimate of his chauffeur's rank in a way that sorely wounded the girl. At the dinner table—at their intimate, formal little dinners of three—when her father spoke enthusiastically of Paul, she wondered what prevented the warm blood from flaming to her cheeks; but when he referred to him in belittling terms, as though he were a common menial, she turned cold in silent, angry rebellion. And she

would say to herself: "Wait, just wait, you hard, proud man."

With such recollections flowing unremittently through her tortured brain the girl pressed doggedly on. She suffered constant bodily distress but gave little thought to her physical condition. Her mind was on herself only in relation to the accident and its results. And to learn of these as soon as possible was the desire that controlled her senses. But she did not neglect to warn herself again to maintain, come what might, her accustomed demeanor of rocklike self-control. Her anxiety must be all for her father, as her mother's had been. There must be no danger of her betraying an unseemly interest in the fate of Paul.

She was drawing near. Another turn in the road and she would be almost there. She stumbled on in desperate impatience. Her heartbeats went faster. She was around the turn. Fifty yards more to go. She could see parts of the automobile. She broke into a running limp. She heard voices! In excitement and trepidation her heart pounded in her breast. She caught sight of her mother. She was talking to the Senator. Where was Paul? Never mind Paul; she would see him in a moment. If her father had revived, Paul certainly had. For the present she must concentrate on her father—greet him happily and affectionately. Her mother, sitting beside her prostrate husband, looked up and saw her.

"Why did you come back, you poor child?" she asked disapprovingly.

The girl paid no attention to the question, but limped up to them and cried:

"Father, thank heaven you are all right. You are not badly hurt? I was so afraid."

No response. Where was Paul? She must have passed by him. He was back of her, but she must not look around—not yet. She went on, in a light tone:

"Father, dear—" As she spoke, her eyes fell on his, and something gripped her in the throat. What a terrible expression! She had never before seen anyone look like that. Could he have struck his head in falling and lost his reason?

Paul! She *must* find out about Paul. Slowly she turned around. There was her coat, as before. But now it covered his entire body, head and all. What could it mean? A weight fell on her thumping heart. She told herself to keep cool, at all hazards. In another moment she was beside Paul. She stooped to lift the coat. Her father shouted hoarsely: "Stop! Stop!" And at the same instant her mother cried: "He is dead; I don't want you to look at a dead man!" But she heard neither. She drew back the coat—and saw the face.

After a single glance she straightened up, with her back to her parents, stared into space, swayed slightly from side to side, and struggled for the self-control, for the mastery over her emotions, that would save her. "He is dead. Oh, God, give me courage to bear up until I reach my room!" She fought back the thoughts of what Paul's death would mean to her. She strained for a sem-

blance of calm. She partly succeeded in dominating her feelings. Bravely, she started to face around. But, unfortunately, in turning she cast an involuntary glance at her dead lover. It was a case of one more look, in spite of herself.

Something had happened to Paul—something had been done to him! His face was discolored, his features distorted. That expression of agony had not been there before! This was not an accidental death! She turned on her father, ablaze with fury, horrified, maddened. Her eyes caught his. He gazed at her fearlessly, firmly; not guiltily but rather accusingly. There was hatred in his look—hatred and contempt. It brought her to a sense of her real situation. This was her own father, with whom she was doomed to live the endless days to come. . . .

"Henry!" cried the Senator's wife, looking up in alarm. "Virginia has fainted!" And she hurried to her daughter.



SUNDAY NIGHT

By Louis Untermeyer

TOSSING throughout this tense and nervous night
 Sleepless I drowse. My soul, for lack of rest,
 Sinks like a bird that, after flight on flight,
 Misses the shelter of its well loved nest.
 So would I gain your side and seek, my love,
 The comfortable heaven of your breast.

Once more to lie beside the window seat
 And see, far off, the ribboned river lights,
 The yellow gas lamps in the dusky street;
 And, pressing close from proud and alien heights,
 The noble skies and the inviolate stars
 Surround and bless us these autumnal nights.

No words—the silence and your breathless name
 Are all that's in the world; and faint and fair
 The distant church bells solemnly proclaim
 To all the meek and Sabbath-scented air . . .
 I take you in my arms—and I awake—
 Groping, with restless anger, for a prayer.

THE TRIBE ON VACATION

By Basil Macdonald Hastings

Every man likes to "reminisce" and tell stories of the good times he had as a boy. Full of troubles they were then but through the mist of passing years they seem like a long past golden age. That is why a good boy's story is read as eagerly by grown-ups as by juveniles. Last month you were introduced here to a family of very human children; the present story tells more of these interesting kids and their hair-raising adventures.

THE first lesson I remember was in connection with a slate. I had a sum to do, but I didn't do it. Instead, I hid the slate pencil in a crack in the floor and then said I'd lost it.

Lessons became serious when the three eldest, Agatha, Lionel and I, were taken in hand by the Pater. He used to teach us every morning for an hour before breakfast and again on Saturday afternoons. Then of course he set us things to do in the daytime while he was at the office.

The Pater's way was funny. For instance, suppose we were doing Horatius. The Pater might spend the whole hour on the first four lines:

Lars Porsena of Clusium,
By the Nine Gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
Should suffer wrong no more.

First of all, we would each of us have to read it aloud. To teach us always to sound the final consonant he would make us add the syllable "er" to most of the words. So that we had to read like this:

Larser Porsena ofer Clusiumer,
By the Niner Godser he swore
Thater the greater houser ofer Tarquiner
Shoulder sufferer wronger no morer.

We thought he was crazy at the time, but when we got to school we were told that we read aloud better than other boys.

For about a year before Agatha, Lionel and I went away to school we had special masters, who each came

twice a week. One was a very beautiful being like the pictures in novels, and he taught us Greek. Another, a very sharp, blue-spectacled chap, taught us arithmetic, and another, a short, fat Frenchman with a beard, Monsieur de Saint Pierre, taught us French. This Frenchman was absolutely the last word. He actually had the cheek to kiss us on the forehead when he came and when he went away. And he always smelt of snuff. We did not learn much, as, all the time he was teaching, we were feeling ill about the kiss we had to go through at the end of the lesson. And Agatha used to giggle at us. There were always wars after the Frenchman left.

The things the Pater used to teach us were useful for our games. Lionel was always Horatius, I was Spurius Lartius and Hugh was Herminius. We used to have an awful job to get Eric or anybody to be Astur, the great Lord of Luna, because Horatius in the book has to jab his sword through Astur's teeth, skull and helmet and make it stick out a "handbreadth" on the other side. The kids were all right for the ranks of Tuscany who "could scarce forbear to cheer," and I had to throw stones at them if they didn't cheer hard enough while Lionel was pretending to swim the Tiber after the bridge was cut down. Afterward we had a "wassail" in the Capitol, which was the hut next the coal heap. Anybody who had any money

had to buy ginger beer for Horatius, or ice cream if it was hot weather. So that shows our lessons at that time were not utterly useless.

II

THE best thing about the Pater was that he gave us the most gorgeous holidays. He would take us all away for six weeks to some place where what we did was of no consequence to anyone else, and, naturally, we were frantically happy.

The journey, however, was no joke. The Pater was one of those chaps who simply should not be allowed to travel without someone to look after them. We had to put up with his looking after us, and it was only because of what was at the other end of the journey that some of us managed to keep our tempers.

When the railway omnibus drew up at the door the Pater would superintend the loading of the luggage. With his pocketbook in his hand he would tick off each article as it was carried out, while we patiently waited in the hall. When the luggage was all up, the Mater, nurse and baby would be sent out, to be followed by the rest of us, strictly in order of age, each one being ticked off as the door was passed.

From the time we arrived at the station till the time the train started we endured absolute misery. First, after the Pater had consulted every porter and inspector in the station, we would get seated in a carriage with all the hand luggage safely put away and the fights for the corner seats all settled, only to be told five minutes later that we were in the wrong train.

More mad inquiries of porters and inspectors would follow, ending in our being bundled into a train when it was almost on the move, so that some of the kids, who thought they were being left behind, would set up dismal howls. The Pater would jump in last and hurt his ankle or something. And then off we'd go. Crikey!

The journey, of course, had to be carefully followed on the map in the time table, and all the cathedrals and

castles and other rot were pointed out to us. Then the Pater would consult the time table that he might tell us the exact length of the stop at each station. If the stop was long, he would, as a great treat, take two of us out to walk up and down the platform, and all the time we were in a state of mental terror for fear the train would start without us.

Once he took Madeline and me out as, according to him, there was a six minutes' wait. The porter said it was only two minutes, but the Pater said that the porter was an ignorant man and that, according to the time table, the stop was six minutes. So he marched us down the full length of the platform, and, as any ass might guess, the porter turned out to be right and the train went off without us. Of course we followed on by a later train, but it stopped his larks for a good long time.

For several years in succession we went to Herm, a little island near Guernsey. In those days visitors were not allowed on Herm, so that it was almost as good as a desert island. It belonged to a German prince.

Tom Duffy was the engineer of the Prince's steam yacht. He knew more than any man we had ever come across. He could make or mend anything and he'd been all round the world. He was very fat and grizzled, but after we got to know him we liked him better than anybody else we had ever heard of, even in books.

Lionel and I had a cutter, an enormous toy boat, called the *Tháís*. It was built by an old shoemaker called Allatt, at Lyme Regis, and the Pater let us take nearly all our money out of the savings bank to buy it. We took it with us on our first visit to Herm, and Tom Duffy went mad about it. He said it was a perfect model with fine lines, and if we liked he'd rig it properly.

So far all we'd done had been to fit it with cannons all round the deck, but Tom wouldn't have these at any price. He took off all the cannons and altered the rigging and sails.

Tom was the first person we'd ever met who told us anything about the world. We had read about foreign

countries in books, of course, but you can't stop to ask questions when you're reading. Tom not only told us all about Africa and Spain and the West Indies and Constantinople and Iceland, but he knew everything about smugglers, pirates and cannibals.

The cutter, when Tom finished it, was really beautiful, and he would spend hours sailing it for us. The Pater was as fond of the cutter as we were. He would sit on the jetty and pretend to read, but all the time he was watching Tom sail our boat. Some years afterward, when we were spending a holiday at Alderney, we left the cutter at anchor in the bay overnight, and some thieves from a French brig stole her. Everybody in Alderney was frightfully upset, and the Pater wrote a pathetic poem about it. On Sundays after dinner he would often recite it. There were nineteen verses, and here are a couple of them:

Wednesday in Bray's broad harbor tight
By bow and sternpost, too,
You were a wondrous noble sight—
Thursday you pass'd from view.

Was it the naughty gale, dear boat,
That drove thee out to sea;
Pirates of shore or thieves afloat
That stole thy grace from me?

Tom's cottage was a glorious place. There were no carpets or rugs on the floors, but the walls were splendid, all nails and good hooks for hanging things on. Everything was clean and tidy, but the walls looked awfully funny with so many different things hanging on them. We once asked Tom why he hung everything up, and he said that when we were as old and as fat as he was we'd understand that it was much more comfortable to get things off the wall than off the floor.

There were only a handful of people on the island. You could roam about all day and never see anyone. Naturally we gave every part of the island that we particularly liked a special name. We had to do this, of course, when arranging to defeat pirate invasions and so on. The warning of the approach of the enemy's ship used to be given by a beacon fire on the Catiline Hill. We

could see the smoke from this as we lay entrenched in Plum Dingle, so called because of the wild plum trees in it. Then we would thread our way through the brambles and gorse and scale the hill where the batteries were supposed to be. The pirates had always landed when we arrived, and at first we just had to fire what Lionel called a few "desultory" volleys at them. Then came the hand-to-hand fighting, and we would fight on till the pirates had to retreat to their brigantine, which was old Tom's boat, and push it off into deep water. Then it would be shelled by the shore batteries until considered sunk, when the pirates would be allowed to come on shore and be Iroquois Indians.

We used to bathe immediately after breakfast at about nine and we never dressed again till it was time for lunch at one, so that some of our best games were on the beach. Perhaps the best thing we did was to reconstruct the Catacombs. We worked on the sand that the sea did not reach, and in a few days we had a glorious underground tunnel. All the walls were covered with crosses made of sea shells and the initials of all the dead saints we could think of. Later on we had massacres. Lionel and Hugh and I were the brutal Roman soldiery, and we burst into the Catacombs and stabbed all the others, who had to keep on singing "Faith of Our Fathers."

There were several posts with letters on them sticking out of the water round about where we bathed, and there was always competition to see who would swim to the farthest post. We could all swim. One day Lionel actually kept on swimming till he got to the farthest post. Then he was so tired that he couldn't get back, and he said his right leg was all prickly. So he had to hang on to that post for nearly an hour till the tide went out. We all nearly died with laughter because he looked like a monkey on a stick. He had to go to bed afterward and have a doctor from Guernsey, but he didn't die. If he had died he could have been buried in Herm. There were no graves there and his would have been the first.

When we were at our beloved island we did not have many real wars. We were so happy that we couldn't quarrel very much, and the prospect of our time being wasted over a "case" being conducted by the Pater was absolutely alarming. However, he did manage to have a case or two. There was one about the ownership of a spade on the ninth of September, eleven days before my birthday. Here is the evidence:

MADLINE: I lost this spade. Agatha found it in the same place where I lost it. The spade is Stanley's.

STANLEY: This spade is mine. I lent it to Madeline. I claim the spade as my own property.

AGATHA: I found the spade. It is mine because I found it in Plum Dingle.

MADLINE: I lost the spade in Plum Dingle.

AGATHA: I claim this spade because two or three days ago I found another spade which I gave to Stanley because he claimed it. I make no claim to the other spade. If this spade on the table is Stanley's and if he broke the other spade, Stanley ought to give me this spade because he broke the other one which I found. If Angela broke the other spade, Stanley should have prevented her.

(2 *Steph. 5th Ed.* 11. 565.)

AGATHA: I gave the other spade to Stanley because Stanley said it was his.

STANLEY: I did not tell Agatha that the other spade was mine. I said: "Perhaps it might possibly be mine."

KATE (the nurse): Stanley certainly said the other spade was his.

MATER: The spade on the table is really Stanley's. He brought it from London and Madeline lost it. In the meantime Agatha found another which Stanley claimed and Angela broke.

JUDGMENT: Agatha, under the mistaken impression that the other spade was really Stanley's, gave that spade to Stanley. Later the spade on the table was found. This spade is really Stanley's. Let Stanley keep the spade on the table. Let Stanley give up the broken spade to Agatha. Let Agatha another time be more careful in trusting to what Stanley says.

I remember Agatha slapped me in the face after we had left the court and there was a short war.

Lionel and I used to catch quite a lot of snakes, but we always used to take them

to Tom first to find out if they were poisonous before we kept them. We brought four home to England one year, and the customs people at Southampton made us open the box. The snakes got out on the table, and all the women were screaming while Lionel and I chased them. One got clean away, probably into someone's box. At least, we all hoped so.

Besides snakes there were some wonderful shells on the shores of the island and any amount of wild fruit. But, best of all about Herm, it was easy to get lost. Although the island covered only about a square mile, someone got lost every day and the nurse used to get frantic. The ones that weren't lost all thought this was silly, because if you were lost for days in Herm you could live on blackberries and shrimps you caught in your handkerchief. Lionel and I did once go off to one of the caverns on the coast with the idea of staying out all night, but about ten o'clock we remembered we hadn't fed the snakes and came home.

Sundays were particularly good days at Herm, for a funny reason. We had to go to mass in Guernsey, and we were always taken over in the Prince's steam yacht. If the Prince was not on board, we had jolly times. His bailiff was the captain and steered the vessel, but he was soon supposed to have been shot at his post and Lionel became captain in his stead. I was first mate and the rest were Lascars. Lionel and I would get on the bridge while the Lascars sulked aft. Then there would be a rush and a shout of "Save the chartroom," and in the fight someone's bowler hat would roll overboard. The Mater would get wild, but she couldn't help laughing at the bowler hat solemnly bobbing up and down on the waves before it filled and sank. All the Pater used to do was to sit and chuckle. He was much more good-tempered on a holiday than he was at home.

III

Just as we were all taught to swim practically as soon as we could walk, so we were also taught to skate. I don't

think we ever made up our minds whether we liked skating or not. It was a bit chilly for one thing, and we had to behave ourselves on the Ladies' Pond at Battersea Park, which meant that any really good game was impossible. But with snow it was an entirely different matter.

When we first came to the house the garden was beautifully laid out with lawns, hedges and flower beds, but after we had been there a few years most of these disappeared. There were so many of us and we played such furious games that we soon wore the grass out, and the hedges got battered about in Charges of the Light Brigade and things like that. As for the trees, they were all right, except about half of them. Lionel and I once read somewhere that salt would kill trees, so we bored holes in them all with a long gimlet and stuffed the holes with salt. Only half of the trees died.

The first thing we did when snow arrived was to have an ordinary snow fight. This lasted till we lost our tempers and began to put stones in the middle of the snowballs. Then someone would get a cut face, and we would stop the fight and become Esquimaux living peaceful lives on icebergs till tea time, when we would all sneeze on purpose and pretend to have colds so as to get a hot black currant jam drink before going to bed.

If there was a bad thaw while the snow was on the ground and rain fell as well, everything in the garden was perfect. It meant that the back garden would be absolutely swamped, and swamped so deep that it would float a raft with two of us on it. We often played at wrecks and rafts in the summer, pretending that the lawn was the ocean, but you can imagine how much better it was to have real water to be wrecked in.

Next door to us lived two French boys, Louis and Albert. They spoke English fairly well and we occasionally let them come in our garden. When the garden was flooded they were always welcome because then we had the Battle of Trafalgar. They didn't mind a bit being the French fleet and getting sunk after

bombardment. Lionel, of course, was always Nelson, and always died when the French raft went under with Louis and Albert up to their knees. He used to say, "Kiss me, Hardy." I was Hardy, but I didn't kiss him.

Of course we used to play at lots of other games, but they all had a kind of fight in them. One day when we were playing the Battle of Lake Regillus, and Lionel and I were Castor and Pollux, an American uncle, whom we had never seen before, arrived. All the kids were fleeing before us and he thought we were bullying them. He said we ought to play a game in which everybody had an equal chance, not one where the stronger were always smashing the weak.

We were always ready to be taught a new game, so we asked him to tell us all about it. He then asked us if we'd ever heard of baseball. Of course we hadn't, and he started to explain. The Mater and Pater came out and sat in canvas chairs on the lawn and everything was beautiful. He soon had us split up into two sides. He was captain of one and Lionel was captain of the other. The game was that he had to pitch the ball at Lionel, and Lionel, if he hit it, had to run in a circle just like a game of rounders.

The first ball the American uncle chucked at Lionel he hit over the wall. So the American uncle forked out sixpence for a new ball. I got the sixpence and rushed out and bought a ball for twopence. Lionel, who knew what it cost as soon as he saw it, made a sign to me he'd tell if I wouldn't go halves.

When the American uncle chucked down his second ball an awful thing happened. The bat slipped out of Lionel's hand and hit the uncle on the head. He gave a yell and the Pater took him to the eye hospital in a cab, while we went on playing Lake Regillus.

Once some sensible person took us to see some sports. We enjoyed it all right, but the thing that fascinated us most was "putting the shot." As soon as we got home we started "putting" things, as heavy as we could find, in the back garden. But the things that were heavy enough were too large, and we

soon made up our minds to get a real shot made of lead, one that we could handle and would be of decent weight.

First we stole some lead spoons and melted them down in one of the enamel milk saucepans. Then we mixed in all our silver paper, including the girls', who howled, and the Mater's basting ladle. But still the lump wasn't nearly heavy enough. At last we thought of our old friend the roof, and had soon torn off enough lead from the gutters to make a substantial weight. When it was cool, we weighed it and it came to over twenty pounds. Of course it wasn't round, but you could get a fine grip on it, and we kept it for years without getting tired of it. When the back garden was flooded it was good fun to chuck it from the dining room window into the swamp, especially if it fell just by some kid's feet.

I don't think we ever played ordinary games except cricket until Lionel and I came home from school for the holidays, when we introduced football and handball. Nor did we know anything about such things as marbles and tops. The youngest kids may have done so after the eldest had grown up, when of course everything went to the dogs.

Principally our favorite games out of doors were: Swimming in the tank on the roof; sea fights in real water; Lake Regillus (Castor, Lionel, Pollux, Stanley); Iroquois Indians; "Farewell to all my greatness" (This was an execution game. We cut everybody's heads off, including Mary Queen of Scots, Buckingham, Jack the Ripper, Charles I and Lady Jane Grey); Romans and barbarians; putting the shot; Horatius and Lars Porsena; Catacombs; ordinary games like highway robbers, mothers and fathers, Curtius in the gulf, pirates, Christian martyrs and hopscotch.

The back garden was divided from the garden proper by a wall about four

feet high made of large, loose stones. Often we used to pull down the wall and build cairns, cromlechs and ram-parts. They were superb stones because they had no sharp edges, though they were very irregular and they would practically stand in any position you put them. If you used all the stones and some boards for the roof, you could make a cave dwelling big enough for two to live in.

Somehow we always associated cave dwellings with cannibals, and when the kids saw Lionel and me building a cave they didn't like it because they knew that some of them would be tied to trees for us to slaughter and eat later on. Outside the cave we would strew old bones from the dust bin. All we did to be like cannibals was to sit inside the cave and growl. It must have been wrong, but we never had a book which told us exactly what cannibals do all day.

The stones were also good for graves. One day Bernard was supposed to be dead, and we built a cairn over him with a cross on top, just leaving a hole for him to breathe. The nurse couldn't find him for hours, and we pretended that we hadn't seen him all day. When he came out he was half dead, but he was quite willing to be buried again next day.

Perhaps the queerest thing about our outdoor life was that we never had a dog. For some reason the Pater did not approve of our having a dog. Someone would give us a pup now and then, and we would feed it till it died of indigestion, but we never had a grown-up dog friend. It was an awful pity. We could have harnessed him to carts, and he might have discovered us dying in the snow, not to mention being a wild beast snarling in one of our stone caves. I wonder now how we got on without one. We had cats, of course, but cats—pah!

(Next month's story will describe the final breaking up of the Tribe.)



A FLIRT is a rose from which everybody takes a petal; the thorns remain for the future husband.

DELICATESSEN

By Joyce Kilmer

WHY is that wanton gossip, Fame,
So dumb about this man's affairs?
Why do we titter at his name
Who come to buy his curious wares?

Here is a shop of wonderment;
From every land has come a prize:
Rich spices from the Orient
And fruit that knew Italian skies;

And figs that ripened by the sea
In Smyrna, nuts from hot Brazil,
Strange pungent meats from Germany,
And currants from a Grecian hill.

He is the lord of goodly things
That make the poor man's table gay,
Yet of his worth no minstrel sings
And on his tomb there is no bay.

Well, it is true he has no sword
To dangle at his booted knees.
He leans across a slab of board,
And draws his knife and slices cheese.

He never heard of chivalry,
He longs for no heroic times;
He thinks of pickles, olives, tea,
And dollars, nickels, cents and dimes.

Yet—in a room above the store
There is a woman—and a child
Pattered just now across the floor;
The shopman looked at him and smiled.

For once he thrilled with high romance
And tuned to love his eager voice;
Like any cavalier of France
He wooed the maiden of his choice.

THE SMART SET

And there are those who grasp his hand,
 Who drink with him and wish him well.
 Oh, in no drear and lonely land
 Shall he who honors friendship dwell.

And in his little shop, who knows
 What bitter games of war are played?
 Why, daily on each corner grows
 A foe to rob him of his trade.

He decks his window artfully;
 He haggles over paltry sums;
 In this strange field his war must be,
 And by such blows his triumph comes.

What if no trumpet sounds to call
 His armed legions to his side?
 What if to no ancestral hall
 He comes in all a victor's pride?

The scene shall never fit the deed,
 Grotesquely wonders come to pass:
 The fool shall mount an Arab steed,
 And Jesus ride upon an ass.

O Carpenter of Nazareth,
 Whose Mother was a village maid,
 Shall we, Thy children, blow our breath
 In scorn on any humble trade?

Have pity on our foolishness
 And give us eyes that we may see
 Beneath the shopman's clumsy dress
 The splendor of Humanity!



TACT is the unsaid portion of what you think.



IF a woman is as old as she looks and a man is as old as he feels, both can age rapidly overnight.



THE vice crusade—An effort to fill up the ocean by throwing sailors overboard.

IN A CELLAR

By Donn Byrne

THEY remained in the room behind the shop until the third volley of riflery crackled on the other side of the bridge. Even then they might have stayed, but they heard several half-choked shrieks, and suddenly the shop door burst open and a woman rushed in. She took three little steps forward and tumbled headlong.

Then they knew they had better go downstairs at once.

The little woman on the floor made no movement. She was lying on her face. Her short, bushy black hair had become loosed from its net. The heavy red stain on her blouse, just beneath the shoulder blade, was widening rapidly. They knew she was dead.

Then suddenly the rifles began, and a dog out in the street howled in panic.

Sonia laid down her baby. She crossed to the sofa near the door and attempted to pick up the little withered body of the old shopkeeper. None of them made a move to help her. She found she couldn't lift him. She dragged him to the door and toward the cellar steps.

The red-bearded ragpicker was past her in an instant. His iron-shod heels clattered on the stones. The fat woman who had the old clothes shop up the street hesitated a moment and came after her. The big black-bearded cantor picked up the child and followed.

She got him down at last and dragged him to the darkest corner. A sombre yellow light trickled through the grating. The ragpicker crushed past her and squeezed himself between the walls.

The old man was very weak. Beyond a stifled groan and the wheezing in his

throat, he had uttered no sound for hours. He kept his eyes closed.

The second hand clothes dealer came down the stairs with the caution of a cat. She held her skirts up with her right hand. Her left clutched a little parcel of clothes. The cantor was stumbling down behind her. Sonia could see the child's white face against his big black beard.

Outside the streets were deserted. Only those who were old and helpless were left in the houses. Some were flying along the country roads. Others were hiding in the hedgerows. The rest were being shot and stabbed and clubbed and trampled to death in the alleyways.

It had all started trivially. An officer of Cossacks had been riding through the Ghetto. His horse had stumbled on the cobbles and a group of schoolboys laughed. The officer lashed at them with his riding switch. A crowd gathered and he had to sabre his way out. In an hour the Black Hundreds had struck.

Sonia's district was far from the spot where the pogrom started, but the Hundred and the peasants were swarming in every street. Sonia's husband had gone over the bridge. She knew he would never come back. She never expected him. She hoped he had been shot clean through the forehead and had been thrown in the canal. Most of the victims would have their heads crushed like eggs and fall under the heavy iron-shod shoes of the peasants or under the hoofs of the dragoons' chargers.

There were now only Maxim Litvim, the old storekeeper, her father and the six-months-old child. The cantor and

the ragpicker and the woman from the second hand clothes shop had rushed in when the dragoons had thundered by the bank of the canal.

They had been together a half-hour in the back room before they moved downstairs, and no one had spoken. The ragpicker was the first to enter, and he snarled when the cantor came fussing in, and tried to bar the door against the old clothes dealer. He believed that the fewer there hid together, the more chance there would be for escape. None of them had been in a pogrom before. All had suffered the extortion of the Black Hundreds, the unscrupulous grafting of the police and the hatred of the Monjiks. They had read and heard of the massacres in Nijni Novgorod and in Odessa and they knew what to expect.

The ragpicker had scurried around and around the room, listening at the door, peeking through the windows, looking even up the chimney; the cantor stood in a corner, motionless and eagle-eyed. The clothes dealer had plumped into a chair and rocked silently to and fro.

Sonia spent the time walking the floor with the child and watching the old man. She couldn't tell him what was happening, but she wondered if he knew.

They could hear sounds from the bridge faintly when the door was closed. The rumble was like very distant thunder. When the door was open, the gunshots and screams were quite distinct. The ragpicker had opened it once and shut it quickly. He would go over every few minutes and press his ear against a crack. Then he would run around the windows.

Back of the houses were the country roads. In front the canal crept in a half-moon. Along the canal bank a band of students lined up with rifles to pick out heads in the water. The rioters were shutting off any escape by the bridge. Companies of armed peasantry closed up the roads, urging their shaggy ponies along with long whining whips. Members of the Hundred flashed in and out of the surge, knifing, shooting and vanishing.

The six in the room knew little of what was going on at the bridge. They knew that there was killing, and that the Moldavian and Albanian peasants were at work in the alleyways. The door was closed when the rifle fire began.

The ragpicker opened the door, and they could hear shrieks and groans in the distance. Above the babble arose the angry chatter of a machine gun that had been captured from the infantry. The mob had cowered a crowd of Jews in a *cul-de-sac*. Then a few flying figures had dashed down the street, and the little woman had tottered in. And they had gone downstairs.

In the cellar it was worse than upstairs. Through the grating to the street they could hear everything. One long shriek predominated. It began with a short sob and ended in a wild crescendo and paused, and then it began and ended and began and ended again.

The child woke up and commenced whimpering. Sonia took it from the cantor and nestled it close. It fell asleep again. The cantor squeezed himself back to the damp wall.

They heard steps flying down the pavement, followed by the drum of a horse's hoofs on the hardened clay. Two staccato cracks from a rifle, and the rider returned leisurely up the street.

Sonia stole up the cellar stairs and into the shop. She opened the door cautiously and looked out. The butcher from two doors down lay on his back in the sunlight with his big carving knife in his hand. His head was twisted curiously to one side, and his black beard was gray with dust. His sheepskin cap lay a few feet further on. Up the street a woman was crawling slowly on her hands and knees toward an open door, and as Sonia looked, the woman lay down and curled herself up like a child going to sleep. From the bridge there came a sound like the beating of waves on a strand.

She went back to the cellar. The cantor had taken the child up from where she had laid it, and was rocking it in his arms. The clothes dealer was muttering to herself. She went over and felt the old man's heart. It was beating

very faintly. She took off her knitted jacket and laid it under his head. His eyes flickered for a moment.

The ragpicker roamed about the cellar as he had about the room above. He stood under the grating and looked up. In the light his short red beard and skinny neck above his filthy gray muffler showed in a saturnine silhouette.

Sonia felt a rising anger against her husband. Why had he gone out when he could have stayed in and perhaps saved them? He might have hit upon some plan to foil the rioters. Even if they did escape, what could she do, with the child and the old man?

She stole upstairs again and looked out. The sounds seemed somewhat fainter. She thought of venturing the two streets to the canal bank, but she remembered the child.

The cantor had again taken it up. He seemed to get comfort from the little body.

He gave it back to her reluctantly. The ragpicker looked up the grating again.

"Is it over yet?" asked the cantor.

"Don't talk to me, you! Do you hear?"

The cantor sank back in his corner. He gave a sudden sob.

Nobody paid any attention to the clothes dealer. She lay huddled up against the wall. The child slept peacefully. Sonia put her hand over its mouth to feel if it breathed.

They heard staggering footsteps somewhere. Sounds appeared to magnify in the house. Sonia could hear the ticking of the clock two flights above. She put down the child again and ran upstairs.

Little Mendel Husik, the tailor, was reeling down the street. His cap was awry and his caftan open. He was drunk. Suddenly he saw her and began singing: "There once was a widow in Little Russia. She had eighteen children." He took off his cap and bowed grotesquely to her.

Sonia slammed the door and ran downstairs. She could hear him reeling along and singing. He would go along like that, she knew, until he walked into the waiting Hundreds.

"Is it over yet?" asked the cantor.

"I don't know, little father," she answered. He looked so white that she left the child with him.

People came running down the street. There were a few shots. Some passed the house. They heard a scramble in the next house, followed by crashing blows. Steps went out again. Something groaned next door, with a rattle in the throat. Then more fugitives and cracks like the lashing of whips. A body fell over the grating and obscured the light. There was a drip, drip, drip, to the cellar floor.

A pause, and the dog outside began a long heartbroken howling. Sonia felt a shiver in her breast and cold on her cheekbones. Her breath seemed to stop.

Sonia knew the Christians better than the others, and she couldn't conceive how they could take part in the butchery—they seemed so gentle and good-natured. She had once met a sergeant of Grodno Hussars while on a visit to her grandmother. He would come around to the kitchen and sit and look at her. He seldom said a word except "Good afternoon" and "Good-bye." He drank huge quantities of tea from the samovar and sat stroking the hilt of his sabre. When her grandmother's cow foundered, he tramped seven miles for a veterinary surgeon. When she went to the well for water, he would take the pail from her and walk beside her, never saying a word. When she was returning to the city he caught her hand and said: "Become a Christian and I will marry you," but she laughed. He seemed a nice, heavy kind of fellow who wouldn't hurt a fly. She had also known two Cossacks who always laughed to her when they passed the door, and they seemed much too good-natured to be real soldiers.

And now they were massacring her kinfolk in the alleys. She couldn't understand it.

The little old clothes dealer stirred against the wall and began whining.

"Fifteen years ago we came here, Yetta Gersten and myself, and fifteen years we worked by daylight and candlelight. Every Friday when we closed up, I put a ruble into a bowl, and it's all gone now.

Who will marry me now with my bowl gone?"

The ragpicker spat at her in disgust. The noises seemed further off. In the distance a bell began tolling with deep, sonorous notes.

"What is that for?" asked the cantor.

Nobody answered.

The old man began to stir. Sonia turned him on his side. The movement wakened the child, and it cried fitfully. In the distance the bell gave another rich, reverberant note. Someone ran down the street.

The darkness and noise were frightening the child. It cried louder than ever. The old man's heel scraped along the floor. The child began to scream.

"Damn you! Can't you keep her quiet?" snapped the ragpicker.

Sonia said nothing but held the child close and rocked it. The screaming gave way to explosive sobs. Every time the bell clanged they shuddered and waited and held their breath for the next stroke. The clang affected them like a heavy blow.

The cantor moved in his corner. A piece of mortar became detached and fell on the floor. They all jumped.

"It's over, perhaps," said he.

The bell gave another stroke. Sonia wished she knew what it was about. She thought there was a faint smell of smoke somewhere.

She was very tired now. The child was heavy, but she felt she oughtn't to sit down. The thought of her helplessness sent tears rolling down her cheeks. They splashed on the child's face. She wiped them off and turned her head to one side so that the tears could fall to the ground.

She felt a tug at her dress. The old man had turned over on his face. She turned him back on his side. She knew that he wanted to tell her something, but she couldn't understand. His eyes opened and shut spasmodically. Only husky sounds came from his throat. She arranged the jacket under his head again and felt his lips. They were moving rapidly. She put her ear to his mouth, but could not distinguish what he was whispering.

The clothes dealer was still whimpering in her corner. The ragpicker flitted in and out of the murky light that came from the grating. He found a stick and began pushing through the bars at the body lying there. He managed to move it on its side several times but it fell back with a dull thud. Something splashed and squelched under his boots.

The cantor crouched in his corner. Every few minutes he gave a gasping sob. Sonia remembered the last time she had heard him in the synagogue. His long black beard had stood out in sharp relief against his white surplice, and the worshipers found themselves in tears as he chanted the Kaddash in his sonorous baritone.

Sonia felt they had been there for years. She had seen the ragpicker only once before, but it seemed as if they had been intimate from birth. The husband who had gone out that morning and never came back was like a figure in an old history. She wondered why the child slept so long. They had been only twenty minutes there but a cycle of days and nights appeared to have passed. What life remained to them, she felt, would be spent in the cellar.

Outside the clamor grew worse. The bell's ringing was faster. Shrieks were louder. She could hear sharp crackling reports, which were of rifles, and more muffled ones, which were of automatics and revolvers. There was an angry murmuring and a faint, thin cheering, and some were singing a song she didn't recognize. The machine gun's chatter had ceased.

She couldn't picture to herself what was happening. She thought of an illustration in a school book of men in armor cutting down men in white garments with short, heavy swords.

Someone had opened the door upstairs and was moving around with cautious steps. The fugitives in the cellar crept close to the wall and cowered against it. Sonia could hear the beating of the hearts in the stillness. The old man did not stir. The steps moved from the shop to the back room and stayed there a minute; then they ascended the stairs. They came down, down again and passed

the door to the cellar. They heard them going to and fro in the shop. The front door swung open; there was a sound as of a match struck against the lintel of the door. Then the steps moved up the street. Everyone breathed with a sobbing catch in the throat.

The ragpicker darted up the cellar steps and barred the door. Sonia felt as if that ended things. The outer world was cast off. They were doomed irrevocably to the darkness and the dank smell. She wanted to dash upstairs and out in the streets and give herself up to the mob around the corner. She smothered a wild desire to scream. As the bar slammed to, the cantor dropped on the floor and buried his face in his arms.

The mob was coming closer. They could hear the cries of, "Kill the Jews!" in the distance. Yells of rage rose like the bellow of angry cattle. Occasionally there was a tinkle of broken window glass. Dust began to filter through the grating. They saw each separate particle flicker in the sunlight.

Their terror was more acute now. Sonia remembered tales of the pogrom at Kishineff. A cantor's head had been carried around on a pole, and they had struck the face, asking it to sing. The ragpicker would be torn to pieces before their eyes. The child would be thrown about from one to the other. The old man would get the easiest death of all—one blow would kill him. But what would happen to herself and the old clothes woman?

The Russian artisans were bad enough, but the rioters were in the main Moldavian and Albanian peasants, with wild rolling eyes and crowbars in their hands.

They were turning the corner to the street. Shrieks of agony split the air. A child was screaming. The trample of the feet overhead was like hammers pounding on a hundred anvils.

The crowd swept into the street. Noise seemed to cover noise. Sonia was deafened. The clothes dealer shrieked at the top of her voice. The cantor cried with loud insistent chokes. The ragpicker clawed nervously at the wall. The old man lay on his back with his eye-

balls fixed. The child was sticking her nails into Sonia's neck. Sonia pressed it closer. She wanted to shriek, too, but was afraid of terrifying the child more.

How long the uproar lasted she did not know. She could hear people rushing into the house. Other people followed them. Someone banged at the cellar door. Then there was the sound of something falling loosely and heavily, and the banging stopped. There was a long-drawn shuddering groan.

The grating was darkened by running feet. They paid no attention to the figure on the bars. The window of the shop broke with an ear-splitting crash.

Above the turmoil, one insistent shriek rose in a sharp soprano: "Kill them! Kill them! Kill them!"

Down the street further a woman cried: "Oh, God! Oh, God! Oh, God!" Her voice was hoarse from shouting.

Several feet dashed up the staircase and into Sonia's bedroom. They were moving something heavy. Sonia thought it was her big iron chest. They staggered with it to the window and hoisted it over. The window panes tinkled and the box fell with a dull thud. Billows of rags filled the street. Someone cheered faintly.

There was no light in the cellar now. Sonia heard a scuffle and dull blows like kicks somewhere near the wall. The ragpicker was attempting to stop the crying of the clothes dealer. God, she felt, if that ragpicker should lay a finger on her, or on the child, or on the old man! She would tear him limb from limb.

The trampling became faster. The feet on the grating moved with the tapping of step dancers. The mob seemed to heave and surge overhead. Then light flashed through the mass of legs and into the cellar. Sonia could see the white face of the ragpicker moving convulsively. A deafening explosion followed. Someone had thrown a bomb.

The noises that had filled the street before were nothing to the babble now. It seemed as if everything had crystallized into one malignant sound. She wished she could close her ears with her

fingers, but she couldn't lay down the child.

She thought she was fainting. She wanted them to come into the cellar and finish it at once.

Her knees were growing weaker and weaker. The sound of the explosion seemed to have cut her heart adrift and it was floating around on air. Cold sweat was pouring from her forehead into her eyes. She felt perspiration from her whole body saturate her clothes and dampen the child's clothes. Her teeth clicked together with a rapid clatter.

The feet moved off little by little from the grating and light began to trickle through. She could distinguish the other forms in the cellar. The old man was still rigid. Only for a slight wheeze she heard when she bent down, she might have thought him dead. The cantor was taut against the wall. The clothes dealer's eyes protruded like those of a fish. The ragpicker's face dilated in a horrible grin. Every time a noise was made their bodies quivered.

Each of them would have preferred certain death in the street to uncertain safety in the cellar. Their eardrums were tingling. Their hearts were thumping with the boom of bass drums. They conjured up grotesque visions of the fight in the street. Red spots flickered to and fro and around and up and down before their eyes.

God! how long would it last? Was there no chance of the troops coming? And Sonia brought up for herself a vision of blue-coated Cossacks advancing down the street, three abreast at a gallop, with their knouts swinging and whistling, their shaggy mounts dashing against the rioters. The mob would give way like a flock of sheep. But the troops were in their barracks. They had no orders to act. They would stay there.

The mob had nearly passed now. Sonia felt they were dragging bodies along with them. Thick, drunken voices yelled: "Crucify them! Crucify them!"

Then a sort of rearguard swept by, howling like wolves.

The street was deserted again. Sonia

found herself half sitting, half lying, on the floor. The child was wide awake. Nervous shivers ran up and down its body. Its heart was fluttering. Sonia scrambled to her feet and ran over to the light under the grating. Its face was white and its eyes closed. Its teeth chattered convulsively. A slight froth was on its lips.

If she could only get it warm somehow, she thought. If she could get upstairs and light the stove!

Up the street doors were banging. A shiver of broken glass, and something struck the street with a thud. Somebody laughed.

Sonia felt her skin prickle suddenly. Something mysterious and terrifying was happening up there.

She pressed the child as close to her as she could, and hurried back to the wall. As she ran a rifle shot cracked, followed by two others. The mob was still murmuring angrily in the distance. They were several streets away.

The cantor staggered to his feet. "I think it's over now," he said. His voice sounded thin and weak. It was like the voice of the child. It cracked on the last word. He fell forward on his knees and crumpled up. Neither the ragpicker nor the clothes dealer moved.

Sonia blew softly in the child's face. She thought that might warm it. She opened the front of her bodice and nestled it.

There was a curious smell of smoke in the air. She had noticed it before, but it was stronger now. She wondered if the others had smelt it.

The doors were banging again. A scream rang out, and broke off with a catch.

Cold, deadly fear seized her. She was in a panic when the mob had rushed down the street, but this was something sinister. She felt the fear she had often felt in the dark, of having a dead hand touch her in the night.

The smell of smoke was becoming more noticeable. Little rasping wheezes came from the old man's throat. The others seemed not to have noticed it. She suddenly saw the ragpicker cross the floor. He looked around.

"Over now, I think," he cackled. "Well, I think I'll be going."

Sonia rushed forward and clutched his arm. A door slammed to. Footsteps came along the street. There was the rasping sound of rifle butts being dragged along the pavement. The ragpicker scurried back to the corner.

Little wisps of smoke crept through the grating. There was an acrid taste in the air. Faint far-off mumbles sounded in the old man's throat.

The steps stopped in front of the house. They turned into the shop. They were in the back room. The floor creaked under heavy boots. There were four or five men there, Sonia thought. They worked around silently except for the falling of their feet. One knelt down and poked under the sofa. Then they went upstairs.

The smoke was thicker now. It seemed to fall into the cellar. It hung halfway between the grating and the floor in gray whorls. It spun in and out in figures of eight, and took the shape of faces Sonia knew. The old man moved from side to side. His breathing was very heavy, with little snorts he attempted to control.

The men upstairs were moving from room to room. They could hear them distinctly in the cellar. They were arguing. Objects were being kicked about and tables and chairs overturned. Curtains were torn down with whining zips. When they went, Sonia thought, she could get the child where it was warm.

The old man's chest moved up and down in spasms. Smoke was getting into his throat. He began short, feeble, staccato coughs. Sonia's heart stopped beating. She knew his coughing attacks. They began like that. If the men above should hear!

She knew who they were. They were the jackals of the Black Hundred who cleared up what the mob had left. They spied out the fugitives. She knew the meaning of the slammed doors and of the choked screams and of the rifle shots. The mob were peasants in fanatical exaltation; these were the demons, the executioners, the plotters of pogroms in the night time. The mob were the ar-

tisans; these were the masters of the craft. There was something horribly workmanlike in their brusque steps and in the silence in which they went about.

The old man began to cough violently. Sonia felt her hair quiver. God, if there were only some way to make him stop! For herself she didn't care; they could do what they liked with her. The others could take care of themselves; two of them were strong men, and the other woman was better off than she. But if she didn't get the child upstairs and warm it it would die.

The steps shuffled about upstairs. They were preparing to come down.

She put the child down on the floor, and knelt by the old man. His coughing was more frequent now. It came in short, rattling gasps. She put her hand over his mouth.

Something was delaying them. They were perhaps looking in one last hiding place. She pressed her hand closer.

The old man was squirming from side to side. He tried to shake the hand off. His eyeballs dilated. His body grew rigid. He beat at her with his hands. His knees moved up and down with spasmodic jerks.

They were coming down the stairs. They were talking in grumbling whispers. They would have passed in a moment.

The old man arched his body. Then he suddenly went limp. Sonia felt numb and dazed. She took the jacket from under his head and put it over his face.

She went over and picked up the child. The smoke had darkened the cellar more and she had to grope for it. It seemed warmer.

The steps were passing the cellar door. She knew they would overlook that. In a few moments she could bring the child upstairs. She wondered if the store had been injured, and if anybody had taken the matches.

The child suddenly broke into loud sobs.

The footsteps upstairs paused for a moment.

The sobbing grew louder.

Then the rifle butts began to smash the panels of the door.

THE CALL

By Faith Baldwin

THE hard white road and the scent o' spring,
The sun and the driving rain,
The morning mist on everything,
The lure of the wanton gipsying,
Ah, lad, they are calling again!

Will ye leave the doubts, the aging care,
The city streets, the stifling round,
Find ye the courage to do and dare,
Escape from the petty fears that snare,
And wander the world around?

The delicate fury of April wind,
The ever-changing, mood-swept sea,
The strange new towns where one may find
New joys that leave no sting behind,
They are waiting for you and me!

Lead—and I follow, the good earth over,
Forget the past—and live—today!
Loosen the fetters and play the rover,
Kiss then my lips—and be the lover;
Dance out of April into May!

Young blood is calling—I never can stay—
Will ye dare to be mine? Then come, lad—away!



ABURNT child dreads the fire, but a woman wonders if the second fire will
be as hot as the first.



VIRTUE is its own reward—so we are all good for nothing.



SOME people fall in love and some are pushed in.

HAMLET AND THE AMERICAN STAGE

Being a Sample Scene from the Famous Play of William Shakespeare as Our American Theatrical Managers Would Fix It Up for Their Own Particular Use.

By George Jean Nathan

THE ORIGINAL VERSION

GHOST: I AM thy father's spirit,
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night. . . .
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood. . . .
List, list, O list! If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

HAMLET: O God!

GHOST: Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

HAMLET: Murder?

GHOST: Murder most foul . . . the serpent that did sting
Thy father's life now wears his crown. . . .
Ay, that incestuous, adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts
. . . won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.

I

THE BELASCO VERSION

GHOST: I am thy father's spirit—you hear, Hamlet? You hear? (*With a loud sob*) *He doesn't hear me! He doesn't hear me!*
Doomed psychologically by such authorities as Dr. Morton Prince and Professor Hyslop of Columbia University for a certain term to walk the night. . . .
I could a tale adopt whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood. . . .
Hear, hear, hear! (*Wildly*) *I can't get across!* If thou didst ever thy dear father love . . .

HAMLET: O God!

GHOST: Revenge his foul and what Lombroso would call his most abnormal murder.

HAMLET: Murder?

GHOST: Murder most foul . . . the serpent that used lethal hypnosis on
 Thy father's life now wears his crown. . . .
 Ay, that incestuous, adulterate beast,
 With witty auto-suggestion, with traitorous psychophysics
 . . . won to his shameful lust
 The static sense, as Flammarion would call it, of my most seeming-
 virtuous queen.

II

THE COHAN AND HARRIS VERSION

GHOST: I'm your old man's spook
 Sentenced for sixty days to walk around Providence, Rhode Island. . .
 I could spin a yarn, kid, whose one-syllables
 Would give you heart failure; give you a young chill. . . .
 Stop, look, listen! If you didn't used to hate your old man—

HAMLET: O gee!

GHOST: Get even for his rotten murder.

HAMLET: Murder?

GHOST: Some murder, believe me! . . . the parlor snake that stung
 Your old man now wears his jeweled Dunlap. . . .
 Yep, that dirty, low dog,
 With some Willie Collier stuff and with the double-cross
 . . . copped off for himself
 The person of my otherwise phoebe-snow royal dame.

III

THE SHUBERT VERSION

GHOST: I am thy father's spirit,
 Doomed for a certain term to walk the night. . . .
 (Song: "*When You Walk in the Night with the Moon Shining Bright.*")
 I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
 Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood. . . .
 List, list, O Listerine*! If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

HAMLET: (Song: "*I Always Loved My Dear Old Dad.*")

GHOST: Then revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

HAMLET: Murder?

GHOST: Murder most foul . . . the serpent that did sting
 Thy father's life now wears his crown. . . .
 Ay, that incestuous, adulterate cadet,
 With stories about his New York, with drugged champagne
 . . . won to shameful white slavery
 The will of my pure innocent young daughter.

* \$25 per performance.

(The GHOST and HAMLET, followed by sixty chorus girls, march out onto runway extending across auditorium of theater.—Song: "Moving to the Music of That Maxixe Melodee.")

IV

THE FROHMAN VERSION**

- GHOST (removing his top hat and gloves): I am thy pater's spirit,
Doomed for a certain period to toddle the night. . . .
I could a tale unfold, m' lord, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood. . . .
I say! If thou didst ever thy dear pater love—
- HAMLET (bored): Sorry! (A servant appears) Tea, Jenkins.
- JENKINS: Very good, sir. (Exit)
- GHOST: Why not revenge his foul and most unnatural murder?
- HAMLET (still bored): Murder? Oh, I say! 'Pon m' word! Sorry. (Enter JENKINS with the tea. HAMLET and the GHOST draw chairs to tea table.)
Sugar or lemon?
- GHOST: No, I thank you. Yes, really, as I was saying,
Murder most foul . . . the cad that did take
Thy pater's life now wears his crown. . . .
Ay, that risqué bounder,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous epigram
. . . won to his vulgar, middle-class lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous lady.

V

THE A. H. WOODS VERSION

- GHOST (a Jew): I'm your father's ghost!
- HAMLET: O hell!
- GHOST: Revenge his sensational murder!
- HAMLET: Murder? Gawd!!
- GHOST: Villainous, terrible, awful murder!! The cur that bit
Your father's life has now got his crown on. . . .
Yes, that incestuous, adulterate beast,
That low, vile, verminous hound,
That base, mean, depraved scoundrel,
That contemptible, scurvy, ignoble crook,
That putrid, corrupt, foul shyster,
With that dastardly dirty work of his won to his shameful lust
My innocent little shop girl wife—(Breaking down) your mother!

** The scene is laid in the drawing room of Lady Trowbridge's house in Grosvenor Square, London.

V—FOR VERA

By Cid Carr

THE lights in the library were turned low. A pleasant fire burned in the wide hearth. Dr. Ryckland, superintendent of the adjoining private hospital for the insane, was seated to one side of the cheery flames. Sounds of polite conversation came from a nearby room, where some people were playing bridge.

At the Doctor's side was seated a woman about thirty years of age. She was still very beautiful. Her wide blue eyes were turned with an intelligent interest to her companion, who was speaking.

"Yes, Mrs. Waverly," he said, "many of the patients are quite sane on most subjects. In fact, one of my best patients is at this very moment playing bridge in there with your husband, my wife and Miss Siebert." His companion leaned forward in her chair, surprise evinced in her features. "There, there," continued the Doctor, smiling, "do not be alarmed. He is a perfect gentleman, one of the finest I have ever met. He has only one besetting sin which society will not forgive—insanity. One of my guests did not turn up, so I invited my patient."

A few moments later the physician was called away and Mrs. Waverly remained alone. The fire was very low now. Its cheeriness seemed to have vanished. The voices from the other room sounded indistinct and far away. Suddenly the plush curtains over the doorway parted and a tall, not unhandsome man quietly entered. He advanced toward Mrs. Waverly and, bowing politely, seated himself in the vacant chair.

"Pardon me"—his voice was very pleasant—"the Doctor sent me in to talk to you for a moment or so. He was called to the telephone. He will not be long." As he turned and looked at her face, suggestively silhouetted by the firelight, he started and paled. Then he laughed quietly and smiled like a weary child. "Strange! At first I thought you were someone else—someone I knew a long, long time ago. But that, of course, is very foolish of me. She died years and years ago." He had turned to the fire and could not see the look of terror in the blue eyes of the woman beside him. His eyes seemed to search the center of the flames for some secret of the past. "Yes. At first I thought you were someone else, someone I used to know, out there in the world; a girl named Vera. We were in love, Vera and I—but she died. All that was long ago." Suddenly he started. "You will excuse me, Mrs. Waverly? I suddenly remember that I counted up the score in that last 'rubber' incorrectly. Good evening." He bowed politely.

The woman, left alone, drew a lace handkerchief from her bodice, and pressed it to her forehead. Ten minutes later she and her husband stepped into a waiting limousine and were whirled homeward.

The Doctor, his guests gone, came into the library again. The flames were no longer dancing merrily. Only a heap of ashes lay on the hearth. Going to a window, he glanced out at the big, silent building adjoining. It was all in darkness. His patients slept. Then he turned. As he did so he caught sight of something white lying before the fireplace, and stooping, picked it up. It was a lace handkerchief.

"Mrs. Waverly must have left this behind," he murmured. "Yes, here is her initial in the corner: V—for Vera."

IN THE CASE OF BRADNER

By Hugh Irish

I AM a mortal coward in storms. One day, at the time of the *Titanic* disaster, I said to a friend:

"I don't know how water danger would affect me: I have always been a landsman, and never had much to do with the water; but a fair-sized whirlwind, picking up the dust and leaves, is almost enough to send me into the cellar and under the potato bin. I believe one of my ancestors must have been carried away in a tornado, and lived through it," I concluded.

"It's a pity," he replied mournfully. There was a strange note of mockery in his voice.

What is this emotion, called fear, that everybody has and yet tries to pretend he has not? My dears, it was fear that put the "man" in humanity. It taught our progenitors to climb trees and hide among their branches, there to chatter and mutter and brood, and develop cunning and mind. Man did not outrun his enemies; he outfeared them. Fear—greatest friend that man ever had, yet we despise it above all things!

When Bradner was a little tad—and you wouldn't have thought, to see him, that he'd ever been little—he was so afraid of the dark that he wouldn't get over one night's fright in time to take on the next. He accumulated a stock. The poor kid was afraid of dark corners on cloudy days.

His parents tried to cure him of his infirmity, until the family doctor, after he had pulled the child out of a fear spasm their experiments had brought on, told them a few things.

Bradner's fear was a natal heritage. Something must have happened somewhere along his ancestral line that would

have made falling out of an airship seem like shooting the chutes.

So he grew up to be one of those men whom a runaway team, a burning hotel, a burglar in the basement or a drunken bully on the street throws into a trance. Danger simply paralyzed him; he was as hypnotized by it, for the time, as a snake-charmed bird.

I do not know that he ever encountered any of the things I have mentioned; I merely say that he grew up with a certain marked trait; for he did grow up, believe me. When I saw him, he was six feet six—there's not many of them at large—and built in proportion. He could have tied knots in nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of a thousand, take them just as they come, with no more danger to himself than if he'd been playing croquet with his niece; yet he wouldn't fight a one-armed lunger with the asthma. His was a marvelous *mésalliance* of soul and body.

When Bradner struck Spokane, the city was as flat on its back as an overturned turtle. It was just one great sluggish maelstrom of despair. Substantially the entire business section of the city had been wiped out by fire a few years before; and into the rebuilding had gone every dollar that could be raked, scraped or borrowed. Then came the panic and hard times, bad enough elsewhere, but in Spokane, burdened with the fire's debt, the situation was one to speak of in a whisper. There wasn't enough business to pay the postage on the correspondence. The bread line was like the line-up at the general delivery window, and the river got a few.

"This town's going into the hands of a receiver," I said to Doc McClain one

day, as we sat in his second story office window and gazed down on streets that simply oozed with down-and-outs, milling about aimlessly.

"I'd hate to be the man who receives her," he grinned back, taking his eyes momentarily off the dizzying procession below, that mesmerized like a cataract.

Now that was the kind of a layout that Bradner sauntered into one matchless fall day, and him with the tender pedals right from the East, and not knowing a bit more of what he was up against than a man knows when he is going to fall in a well. I saw him one day, coming up Riverside—saw him two blocks away—plowing through the crowd like a mastiff through a bunch of kittens, and everybody looking around at him after he had passed.

"Great grizzlies!" I said to Jim Hudson, who was with me. "Look yonder, what's coming!"

"Say," he grinned, after he had taken a good look, "if I ever get into a mix-up with that rhinoceros, I want you to promise to take care of my folks."

Bradner had gone straight from the train he came on to Sim Bailey's old stand on First Street. He had known Sim back East. Likely he expected Sim to be able to put him next to a hundred per or thereabouts; but Bailey had been closed out at sheriff's sale a few weeks before, and had gone nobody knew where—some said Helena. It didn't matter; for Bradner couldn't follow him. He had just about enough money left to take him to Medical Lake when he landed, and he couldn't write home for more without eating a very choice batch of crow, for he and his father had disagreed about his coming West.

So he joined in the starvation promenade, and he didn't even know at first what it was that he had made connections with. He hustled out looking for work, as cheerful as a schoolteacher selling Bibles in vacation, when he might just as well have been digging for diamonds in Iowa. Later on, when he began offering to work for his board, he discovered that the vein in that bonanza had pinched out, too.

Once, by some strange whim of the

fates that watch over innocents, he did get a job, with a rancher out near Davenport. I suppose the man must have picked him out from among the others to move his house, or something like that, and save hiring an outfit; but the job didn't last. The rancher sold out and went back to Ohio, and Bradner hoofed it the thirty miles into town to save railroad fare.

By this time Bradner began to see what he was headed for, and he suddenly became fanatically frugal. Say, the rations that man doled out to himself wouldn't pay for the wear and tear of digestion. He lived like a man experimenting in the cause of science, and stretched out his few remaining coins until he was liable to arrest for mutilation of the currency. He received a few dimes and something very rare in the way of victuals now and then at the back doors of residences for doing little tasks; but he lived mostly on memories of the past.

One of his priceless dollars, which would have financed him about six weeks under the marvelous commissariat he had adopted, went into the coffers of a fake employment agency. He made the rounds of the pawnshops with a few trinkets, of course, but he might as well have thrown them in the river. The pawnsharks wouldn't loan two dollars on a deed to the falls.

Well, Bradner certainly did all that any man could. I can't think of any suggestions in domestic science that would have enabled him to pull through the crisis. Although it takes a man of his size a long time to starve, there is a limit, of course; and so, as he stood one day and looked at the passing throng, with eyes that saw instead a little white house, a red barn and a green orchard on an Illinois farm, he thumbled the remaining coins in his pocket and found that they footed up thirty-five cents.

With a quivering sigh, that sounded oddly weak and incongruous from the lips of such a giant of a man, he turned dejectedly down the street and strove to shake off the terrible homesickness that lay on him like a malaria. When he reached Second Street, he stood a full

five minutes in front of a little grocery store before he entered it and laid a nickel on the counter.

"Which kind is the cheapest?" he asked in a low voice, pointing at some cookies in tin cases on a low shelf.

"These," lied the grocer, laying his hand on the best in his stock.

Bradner nodded, his eyes on the floor.

He never looked up at the face of the man behind the counter, nor did the grocer look at him. Neither could have told afterward what the other looked like. It was like the passing of two beings in troubled darkness. The grocer kept his eyes fastened on one corner of the store room, as though fascinated by a rackful of brooms hanging there. His strange preoccupation caused him to keep on putting cookies into the paper sack until they ran over on the floor. He reached up and pulled down a larger sack, dumping the cakes into it, so that Bradner would not notice the extra quantity. And still neither man could look into the other's face, for embarrassment.

Bradner returned to the street and furtively sought a secluded place in an alley, to eat a few of the cakes in its privacy; a man never parades a spread of that kind. When he saw what the grocer had done, he looked into the sack so long and distractingly that his hunger passed, its place being taken by a couple of very unpleasant sensations that we call self-pity and shame.

While he stood suffering the most poignant pain that ever comes to a strong man, a comely young woman came to the back door of a nearby restaurant. It was Katie Norris. Her husband had been killed by an explosion in the Northern Pacific yards a few years before, and Katie kept off her relations by running a little eating house on Second Street.

She sized Bradner up the minute her big Irish eyes rested on him. She had become an adept at reading faces during the past year; for she had been doing all that her conscience would allow for hundreds of hungry men. The stiff, straight-ahead gaze of shame with which Bradner started to leave the place was to

her infinitely more eloquent than the whining rote of mendicant or hobo. She saw the sack of cookies, more reliable than a special report from Bradstreet or Dun, and knew that the man's giant strength could not avail to earn for him a better meal.

She waited until the lump in her throat subsided a little, though enough of it remained to add a hesitating, tremulous quality to her slightly Irish brogue.

"You needn't be ashamed," she said gently, stepping in front of him. "You've tried to find work—I know that well."

"I've offered to work for my board, I think, a hundred times," he replied earnestly; and he was now looking straight into her pitying eyes.

"I know, an' 'tis not wan bit o' use." Her eyes shifted from his face to the row of empty boxes littering the alley. "But 'tis lucky I happen to be needin' a man for my heavy work just now," she lied glibly. "Come in."

Bradner set down his sack of cookies and followed her inside.

For a time he washed dishes, carried slops, went on errands and did whatever else he could find to do. After a few days he began to notice that whenever he was busy some of the other employees were idle; there wasn't enough work for all. He wondered, too, how it happened, with a city full of men hunting work, that Mrs. Norris had needed help just at the time he came along. He saw how she was giving away food to other unfortunates, and a suspicion of the truth rapidly became a conviction. Then his conscience got busy; for Bradner was as white as they make 'em, except the one terrible defect with which a malign heritage had branded him. He was a long way from the kind of man who could reconcile himself to living on a woman's bounty.

So one morning he failed to appear. Katie ran up to his room over the restaurant, and, finding the door ajar, went in. On a table lay an envelope addressed to her, and in it was a note and thirty cents in small coins.

If ever a woman went up in the air, Katie Norris made an ascension when she saw that money. She simply raved,

flung the money as far as she could send it, and anathematized the town and its environs for fifty miles out.

When she had quieted down, she sent for Bernstine. He had been on the police force three years, and ate most of his meals at her place. Seated at a table in the restaurant, she told him of Bradner's going, showed him the note, and told him of the money.

"Say, Ed," she continued, a cloud of trouble showing in her dark eyes, "it's an awful good friend you've been to me, and on the strength of it I'm going to ask you to have the force hunt up Bradner and bring him back. I can't—see him go under."

"Sure, Mrs. Norris, if he hain't gone over the falls we can find him in ten minutes. It will be just like hunting for an elephant that's got away from the show. He's been known to the force from the day he landed; never done a crooked thing, either. The boys all call him High Boy down at headquarters. I can find him all right, but bringing him in is a different proposition. I'll need a capstan if he's in a notion to pull back. What'll you do with him when you get him back?" he asked, nodding at the note lying on the table. "He won't stay here."

Katie gazed at the note, thinking deeply.

"He's just a great big ninny, and as square as a brick block," she mused aloud. "Can't you do something for him, Ed?" she asked. "Couldn't you get him a place on the force, or something?"

"Well, there's twenty men on the Mayor's list right now, so I've heard, and some of 'em promised." He thought a moment, and then slapped his thigh with his hand. "Say, he'd be a bear, all right," and he laughed like a half-wit. "I'm going to put it up to the Chief, anyhow," he went on. "Catherton was knocked out stoppin' a runaway on the Division Street bridge day before yesterday, and I don't think he'll get back on his beat for some time." He got up to go, still shaking with gusts of laughter.

"Hurry up and find him, first," Katie urged, worried by his suggestion about

the falls, but smiling slightly at his laughter.

The Chief laughed, too, very much as Bernstine had, when the idea was first mentioned to him; so did the Mayor. You know how a thing of this kind will sometimes lay hold on everything it touches. It was Bradner's size that did it.

"What do you say, Wilson?" the Mayor asked. "Do you think the rest of you could club together and hold him down if he should take a notion to run the department?"

"Oh, he'd be all right," grinned the Chief. "We'd have to handle him some way, anyhow, as long as he's in town. Better wait until we get a couple of special uniforms made, though; we may have to send East for more cloth."

And that is how it came about that Bradner either had to lie down or tackle a job that he had about as much desire for as a man would have to get sawed in two; for the work offered him half jokingly was no joke. With the city full of starving men, and four or five hold-ups almost every night, there was something doing in police circles most all the time.

When Fate stacks the cards, she sometimes does not even take the trouble to hide the operation. Bradner saw clearly enough that Bernstine, the Chief, Katie and the rest of them were as mere checkers moved about on a board by a something that seemed bent on seeing whether there was anything in him worth saving. It was a plain case of make good or get off the earth, and that old, short-breathed demon, Fear, was closing in on him like a deadly gas.

For once, his shrinking soul was stirred to bedrock. Pale and distraught, in his little room over the restaurant—for he had returned to Mrs. Norris's—he paced the floor like a madman, his huge fists unconsciously clenched, as if in readiness for an awaited foe. If the Mayor and the Chief had come upon him just then, they might have withdrawn his appointment and wired the Governor for a detachment of troops. Bradner cursed himself, his weakness and his remote ancestry.

His poverty, his helplessness and his

desire to prove worthy of the confidence of the Chief and Bernstein would never have saved Bradner in this crisis; but when he thought of the woman downstairs who, from her footing on the banks of a torrent of disaster, had held out to him a helpful hand, he wished mightily that the intangible monster that held him might assume physical shape for just one brief minute, until he could lay hold on it with his bare hands.

Well, he settled down, at last, without wrecking the building, and when he came out of that eight-by-ten room, he had a funny little pale smile on his face that nobody had ever seen there before. He had called his curse.

"How's the Big One doing, Wilson?" the Mayor asked of the Chief a few weeks later.

"Finer'n silk. He's the best man on the force, and was right from the start."

"Scares them into submission, does he?"

"Well, I don't know as it's that so much. He's a born pacifier. There's something about the man—a sort of strange feeling he gives one that he has gone over the whole thing a million years ago—that makes the petty brawls of these geezers look cheap and not worth while. He smooths things over and quiets the scrappers down nearly every time. He hardly ever has to bring a man in."

"Well, for heaven's sake, give him rope. He can't hypnotize too many of 'em to suit me."

Of course there were some things that Bradner could not smooth over, and some that had gone too far before he had reached the scene. It was in these cases that his newfound nerve got its try-outs. He had to fight it out with himself all over again each time, and he didn't have a little private room to do it in, either. Sometimes it had to be done quick.

Now, although Bradner did not realize it, he was doing the only thing that can be done for a case like his. Fate had placed him in a better school than the professors could have devised. Every time he faced the music, he was tighten-

ing his strange hold on the Thing that heredity had saddled on him.

And while he was doing this, there was not a man on the police force who ever suspected that he was painting out a streak of ochre. They all supposed he was the kind of man that wouldn't run from a falling wall.

But Bradner wasn't out of the woods yet.

II

In the southeastern quarter of the city there was, in those days, a place called Shantytown. It was a tract of land held by squatters against more wealthy claimants, the dispute being in the courts for years, the squatters, meanwhile, in possession. The district was covered with a lot of sheep sheds, which the squatters apparently mistook for human habitations; at least, they lived in them. These shacks seemed to be arranged on a plan derived from the debris deposited by a tornado. There was not a street or an alley in Shantytown; but there were a few well worn paths, and a great many little blind nooks and courts, among which a man could get lost in the daytime with a guide and blueprints. Labyrinthine, unlighted, unpatrolled, it was no place to take the visiting delegations from Seattle or Tacoma when showing them over the city.

About that time there was a man down in Southern Oregon who got his name in the papers in seventy-two-point Gothic type. It was Packard. He and a neighboring rancher locked horns over a little dab of wild hay that both wanted to harvest. You know there are places in the West where men will fight quicker over a few forkfuls of hay than they will over their women folks. It seems there isn't enough hay to go around.

Well, they carried the case up to the county seat, which was only about seventy-five miles distant, and Packard lost out. He was one of those men to whom defeat is bichloride of mercury. He left the courtroom in a frame of mind that would fuse platinum, swore he

would get both the neighbor and the town, and skipped out.

The neighbor had been dead a week before his body was found, and in the meantime two citizens of the little town, which had sprung up on one of the earlier irrigation projects, ran onto Packard one night, making ready to blow up the dam with dynamite. Packard shot them both, much as he would two jack rabbits, and was riding his cayuse into the desert like Sam Hill when the dam went into the air.

A man hunt followed, which the newspapers kept tab on from day to day. About a week after the blowing up of the dam, Packard put another man out of circulation when a posse got too close to him in the Blue Mountains. After that most everybody concluded that he'd make a good subject to let alone.

During Bradner's hard luck days, he was sometimes forced to associate with some pretty tough customers; he wasn't always in a position to pick and choose his companions. One night he and a little white-faced crook named Everts went into camp beside a shelving pile of lumber in Brown's yards, down near the falls. It threatened rain, and they edged the outer boards out over their heads as a kind of roof. A gust of wind came along in the night and tipped the pile over toward them.

Everts was asleep, and I guess there isn't any doubt that he would have commenced practising the scale on his harp about that time; but Bradner was sitting with his neck against the pile of lumber, meditating on the glories of the West, no doubt, and when he felt the weight of the lumber against his back, he dug his heels into the earth and held the pile from a complete fall until Everts could throw enough boards off the top to restore the shifting center of gravity.

Everts thereupon became a worshiper of Bradner, as you may have seen a terrier fasten its affections on a Newfoundland.

Well, Everts came to Mrs. Norris's place one night—snooping and furtive as a coyote—and asked for Bradner. He had gone up to his room, and Katie, distrustful, requested Everts to come

again. No, he had to see him that night. It was closing time and the restaurant was deserted. Seating Everts at a table farthest from the cash drawer, Katie ran up to Bradner's door and knocked. Bradner came to the door.

"Billy, there's a dopey-looking little man downstairs who says he must see you tonight. I don't like the look of him, and I'll order him out if you say so. He says his name is Everts."

"Oh, it's Everts, is it? You sized him up about right, Mrs. Norris; but I can't imagine what he'd want with me tonight. I'll come down."

"Can't we go some place where we can talk private?" Everts asked cautiously, after Bradner had taken a seat at the table.

"Oh, this is all right," Bradner returned carelessly. He had not noticed the other's agitation, and supposed he wanted to make a touch. The crook sank his voice to a low tone.

"Billy, I seen Packard tonight, and he's in a house in Shantytown right now."

"You're dreaming, Everts," drawled Bradner.

"I tell you it's Packard," protested Everts, forgetfully raising his voice in his excitement and quickly lowering it again, with a quick, ratlike glance around the room. "I knowed him in Walla Walla five years ago, just as well as I know you now. I was knocked silly when his picter come out in the papers. You'd know him in a minute, from it."

Well, Everts's words and manner convinced Bradner absolutely, and you would be surprised to see how quickly that Thing that Bradner thought he had choked to death came to life at this point—came to life and got on its feet and leaped on Bradner without the thousandth part of an instant's warning, wrapping its palsyng tentacles about his great frame, until he sat there less a man than the scrawny crook at his side.

And right there at that little table, with its white cloth, its salt and pepper shakers and its mustard bottle, in a silence broken only by the infrequent flop and splutter of the electric lights, a terrible fight took place between a giant

older than the river's falls and a stripling of only a few months' nurture: a fight without rounds or referee, a fight to the death.

Bradner saw that Fate had followed up her little trick of stacking the cards, by loading the dice. This thing that she now offered him was the real goods, the last gage in her stock; for Packard was just another name for getting shot.

Everts didn't know what to think of the dazed look and deathly pallor that overspread Bradner's face as he sat gazing straight at nothing, motionless as a stone. So long he sat thus, Everts thought he had suffered a stroke. When at last he rose from the table, his great body was a-tremble and a mist of perspiration was on his face.

All he said was, "Come on."

After they had left the restaurant, Katie Norris suddenly woke up. She had overheard the name "Packard" when Everts raised his voice momentarily, and that was enough for anyone who read the newspapers. A dozen times she ran to the telephone to call the police station, but each time her nerveless hand fell away from the instrument. She was afraid of doing something that might cause Bradner to lose his position. At length she closed the restaurant and went to her room, there to await in an agony of suspense, listening, the dragging minutes marked by no sound or movement except her half-breaths of deepest emotion.

When Bradner turned eastward on Sprague Street toward Shantytown, Everts looked up at him as if he had just discovered smallpox breaking out on his favorite's face.

"Ain't you goin' to git the bunch?" he asked, stopping as short as if he had run into a clothes line in the dark.

"No, Everts, I'm going alone." Bradner spoke as one in deep thought, who had forgotten the other's presence.

"Hell's fire, man!" exploded Everts. "If you want to commit suicide, there's a lot o' better ways than this. Packard's crazy as a loon, I tell yuh, when he's mad. I know'd that long ago. You'll git the swag, anyhow, or most of it, if you take the cops with you."

"I wasn't thinking of the reward, Everts," drawled Bradner smilingly. "I've got a bigger stake in this than the reward."

Everts hung back. Bradner argued with him and tried to convince him that his plan was the best. He explained that, if they surrounded the house, Packard would be sure to get onto it and might kill off half the police force of the city before they could get him stopped.

"Yes, but where do we come out at, this way? That's what I'm interested in."

"Leave that to me, Everts. You come on and show me the house, and you won't need to go near it."

Everts went, eventually; but he didn't act much like a man trying to get first choice at a land opening.

The aspect of the city underwent a striking change as they entered the verge of the strange district of the huts. The brilliant lights, the throngs of people homeward bound from theater and lodge, the clanging street cars, gave place suddenly to a gloom faintly broken here and there by a lighted window. A stillness brooded, which enabled them to hear the snorts of switch engines in the distant railroad yards to the east. A few pedestrians appeared as fitting shadows in the darkness, their footfalls noiseless on the beaten paths of turf, their voices sunk to low tones, in keeping with the air of apprehensive alertness that seemed to prevail.

Everts led the way, stealthily as an Apache, to a point not far from the center of the district. Stopping beside an unlighted shack, he clasped Bradner's arm with the shaking fingers of one hand, pointed with the other across a small open area toward another building, one of the windows of which was lighted, but curtained, and whispered:

"He's in there! I seen him go in, less than two hours ago!"

Without a word, Bradner started toward the door.

He crossed that little court with the air of a general on parade. There was no crouching, no haste: he moved forward with the deliberate, relentless stride of an enraged saurian.

To Everts, who stood watching like a man waiting for a fuse to burn through, it seemed that the door was unlocked, so slightly did the breaking of the lock with his shoulder check the big man's progress.

At a table within sat three men playing cards. Packard was not in sight. Without a word to them, Bradner turned to the nearest of two doors in the flimsy partition dividing the interior of the building, and threw it open.

This is the way that Bradner, driven to desperation by a fault, finally met it face to face. He laid himself wide open, challenged death as unmistakably as if he had sent his nearest friend to arrange the details of the duel. He deliberately baited his fear; but it was a risky pastime, for Packard was there, in that room.

Packard snoring! The man was sleeping like a drugged drunkard.

Bradner had taken the only course by which Packard could have been corralled without another revision of the census, and, at that, it had to be coupled with a streak of luck that is as rare as a million-dollar legacy from a rich uncle. He removed a big revolver from under the man's pillow, a little one from one of his pockets, and then started in to wake the lunatic up. It took ten minutes to get the man up and get his clothes on him. Packard was just too dead for sleep to be even curious about what was happening, and he wouldn't have crawled out of a fire. Bradner had no handcuffs with him, didn't need them; when Packard felt that arm of stovepipe size linked in his, he didn't require the advice of an attorney to decide that his little private insurrection was over.

The three men at the card table never moved. One of them was Packard's cousin. Doubtless they thought the house was surrounded by police; for, though Bradner was without uniform, they all knew him by sight.

On the way back through Shanty-

town, Everts formed a badly scared rear guard, nervously fingering the trigger of a revolver in a way that endangered every resident of the district.

There was some commotion at the police station, believe me, when the pageant showed up there. As soon as Captain Ames could force himself to believe the evidence of his own eyes, he reached for a telephone and called up the Chief at his home.

"Say, we've got Packard!"

"Yes, you have! How about Charlie Ross, and the man who struck Billy Patterson?"

"I don't know anything about them; but we've got Packard, all right."

"Who got him? And where did you get him?"

"Bradner just now brought him in from Shantytown."

"But Bradner isn't on nights!"

"No; but a man went to his room and told him where Packard was."

The Chief came down to headquarters at once. He took time to absolve Bradner for a rank case of housebreaking, and spent the rest of the night dictating telegrams and giving out news to reporters. The newspapers didn't do a thing to Billy the next day.

When Bradner reached home, Katie awaited him in the dimly lighted hall. Bradner was walking on air and only touching the ground once in a while to guide himself. There was a song in his heart—two songs—and, without a word, he went up to Katie, and, picking her up as though she were a little girl, pressed her to his breast.

"Oh, Billy!" she gasped laughingly. "How c'u'd ye know that I wanted ye to do just that?"

"I've killed my Jonah, Katie," was his irrelevant reply. "I ain't afraid of the devil now."

Her glorious eyes were laughing into his as she replied: "In that case, Billy, I w'u'd pity the devil."



WHEN Satan wishes to scare a woman into submission, he sends Old Age as a courier.

WHY HE DIVORCED HER

By Paul Hervey Fox

OSCAR WILDE ALLEGES LACK OF APPRECIATION

LORD SHAFTON lay back softly in the crimson pillows of his beautiful lounging room. The scent of early June roses floated in through the Japanese windows, stirring his finely strung senses. The perfume of Oriental incense rose in delicate wisps from a bronze tray near his side. He sipped a long glass of purple wine that stood upon a teakwood tabouret beside him, blew a few puffs of a scented cigarette through his quivering nostrils, and then, raising his head languidly, spoke to the only other occupant of the room—a slender, graceful woman.

"How can you ever hope to understand me?" he remarked wearily. "Art does not affect you, and you believe thoroughly in such antiquated virtues as honesty and truthfulness. After all, what is a virtue? Does it matter? And then you are so dreadfully sincere! No, life any longer with you is intolerable."

The fine lace curtains swayed softly in the evening breeze, as the slender, frail notes of a far-away violin came dimly to their ears. Leaning lightly against the mantel, and gazing rapturously at a great lavender dandelion, the woman did not answer. Night, with her daughter, Twilight, slowly strangled Day. Darkness and the stars looked down contemptuously upon the muttering town.

SCOTT CHARGES NON-SUPPORT—ON THE WOMAN'S SIDE

The hall in which our characters were seated was a lofty and spacious example of the dwellings of antiquity. Upon

a dais at one end of a long raised table of roughly hewn timbers, Rowena, with her hair arranged in paper billets, was gnawing her breakfast bone. At the opposite end of the structure, the knight Ivanhoe sat drinking from his bowl a broth made of stale peas.

"Noble lady," said our hero finally, looking up with a frown, "how comes it that this ill fare is all we find with which to break the night's fast?"

"My liege," replied Rowena, throwing her bone upon the floor with a gesture of infinite disgust—"my liege, what more canst thou demand upon the allowance thou awardest me?"

With a cry of rage, the knight leaped to his feet. "Shudder, thou ill-advised woman!" he roared. "Thou shouldst be able to support *me*! Wherefore I leave thee for Rebecca. Fat Isaac, it may be, will unburden his coffers to feed his daughter's spouse, if thy churlish guardian will not."

So saying, he turned upon his heel and swiftly left the apartment.

E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM WITHHOLDS HIS REASON FOR A LATER INSTALLMENT

SIR HERBERT BRAITHWAITE came home from the House of Commons at an unusually early hour. As he got out of his limousine, a man in plain attire by the curb stepped up to him and placed a slip of paper in his hand. Instantly he was gone. Sir Herbert looked about him in some perplexity, then unfolded the slip and read. In a moment the ruddy flush of his face had changed into a horrible pallor. With a low cry, he rushed up the steps

and opened the door of his handsome dwelling.

In the hall he paused abruptly, and the paper fluttered from his hand. Lady Braithwaite was descending the stairs, a smile upon her delicate, aristocratic features. She was slim and divinely fair. Even Sir Herbert could not deny that. He stooped and picked up the paper.

"Listen," he said, and in a strange, stern voice he read the following:

(To be continued in our next)

LAURENCE STERNE IS OFFENDED BY
PERSONAL REMARKS

My wife having arisen from her couch and joined me at the table, I thus addressed her:

"Sophia, my dear, you are looking but poorly this morning."

In truth the remark was ill chosen, but I had scarce looked for the rebuke with which she returned her own sentiments.

"God help thee for thy own looks, Sterne," quoth she. "Thy countenance could stand much alteration."

"Woman," says I, feigning a rage, "art thou displeased with my visage?"

"Displeasure is but a small word to put to my feelings upon't," she returned.

"Well, then," says I, "since it displeases you, you shall see it no more."

With this I rose and stalked from the room, marveling a little at my own courage. "But, alas," thinks I, when I was fairly alone, "a sorry rogue art thou, Sterne, to leave thy poor spouse thus!"

But I cannot delay longer on the subject. For I must now treat of a more serious and worthy matter—that

of a young puppy which I saw lamed most sadly in Calais. Which therefore shall be the substance of my next chapter.

ELINOR GLYN ARGUES THAT MARRIAGE
IS TOO RESPECTABLE TO SELL WELL

THE soft, mellow lights of the richly decorated Vienna restaurant played over their faces. The tinkle of glasses, the low and rhythmical sound of the orchestra, the popping of champagne corks, and the perfume of the flower-laden vases gave the place a strange and enchanting atmosphere.

Reginald, six feet two, and with features chiseled like a Greek god's, smiled gently at the princess across the table.

"Alas, dearest, it is not to be," he said, looking in the depths of her dark and wonderful eyes.

Her voice quivered brokenly. "Why not, Reginald, my loved one—why not?" She leaned over to him, adding:

* * * *

Painfully he answered: "Because, oh, flower of the world, a settled marriage is so respectable, and"—here his manly voice broke into sobs of emotion—"and Miss Glyn doesn't believe in 'respectable' books. They—they don't sell as well as the other kind."

She buried her face in her hands, while the orchestra, as if by some strange intuition, changed to a soft and almost wistful air. When she looked up a moment later, he had gone.

She leaped to her feet, rushed over to the orchestra leader, and drawing him to one side, whispered in his ear:

* * * *



ALL is not bold that titters.



MEN that can afford an auto should not run down those that cannot.

THE SIGNOR SEEKS ADVENTURE

By H. D. Couzens

THE Signor yawned and smoothed his rumpled curly hair before the narrow mirror. He glanced irritably out of the window at the tedious expanse of sagebrush, cactus and yucca through which the train was passing, yawned again and stepped out of the stateroom, softly closing the door.

The rest of the company were taking the customary siesta, but the Signor could not sleep. He was too full of pent-up nervous energy. To be left to his own devices when bubbling over with boyish vitality was a punishment almost greater than he could bear. It had led him into trouble more than once since they had begun this long, irksome journey across the continent, for the Signor was not only healthfully irresponsible, but also wholly irresponsible. Some of his practical jokes had frightened his companions half out of their high-strung senses. That morning he had fired the pistol of his valet and secretary, Torquato, out of the window; he had missed the train at Atlanta; had been lost for hours in New Orleans, and only yesterday had stolen away from El Paso and was found, cheering madly, at the bull fight over in Juarez, just in time to be haled aboard the train.

As he passed down the aisle of the stateroom car the Signor carefully pasted a sheet of paper on each door with a wafer. They were caricatures of the occupants of the staterooms, drawn by the Signor. From one of the rooms came a long, gurgling, animal snore. The Signor shuddered and affixed his paper with a vicious spat of his palm. The snore was Francati's, and the Signor did not like the basso, with his gross body and coarse manners. His

caricature of Francati was particularly atrocious.

He crossed the vestibule into the next car, a Pullman standard, and dropped into a seat in the smoking compartment. From a beautifully jeweled case he selected a gold-tipped cigarette seven inches in length, lit it, sighed drearily and gazed out at the interminable desert with an air of melancholy. He was bored to the point of extinction.

Two men who were talking earnestly paused for an instant to eye him curiously. They saw a tall, portly man, richly clad. His large, olive-tinted face was affably handsome. His black mustache had an upward, military twist, and he breathed prosperity and well-being. The Signor looked a personage, despite his extreme taste in jewelry.

"I suppose," said one of the men, "that you're going straight on to Phoenix?"

"No," replied his companion; "I'm getting off at Bowie, to see a man at Globe, and will go over to Phoenix by stage. See you in a day or two."

The Signor pricked up his ears. Phoenix! That was where he was going. His party was en route to San Francisco. Three or four, however, who were not to appear there for the first few nights, would stop at Phoenix to give what the manager called a "pin money concert." The Signor had no head for the details of travel, but he remembered that his party were to stop at a place called Maricopa and from there take another train to Phoenix. From this stranger's speech it appeared that there was another route to Phoenix. Eureka! The plot of an adventure was born!

When the trainman came by the Sig-

nor intercepted him. "You will tell me, please, how one is to arrive at the place call' Glob'?" said he.

"Get off at Bowie—next stop," replied the trainman. "Branch line runs from there to Globe."

"Ah! And from Glob' one goes to Phoenix by what is call' 'es-tage,' is it not? What is this es-tage?"

"Eh? Oh, stage coach! It's a wagon—bus—carryall, see?" said the trainman superciliously, as one should speak to foreigners. "An' it's drawed by horses—ponies—gee-gees; understand, sir?"

"Yes, yes. You are very simple. And—ah—how long is it for the es-tage to arrive at Phoenix?"

The trainman did not know, being new on the line, but he did not care to display his ignorance. He was, moreover, a little miffed at the Signor's remark about his simplicity. It sounded innocent enough, but—

"Couple of hours," said he shortly, and vanished about his business.

The Signor's robust frame shook with an inward chuckle. When he was not being pampered by the women or fawned upon solicitously by the obsequious Torquato, he was scolded by the manager or left to suffer the pangs of loneliness. He would show them! He would leave this tiresome train, travel by "es-tage" to Phoenix and arrive when they had given him up for lost. How the manager would storm and fuss and the women fluster hysterically like a lot of hens! They always did.

Assuring himself that Torquato still slept, the Signor donned his sable-lined overcoat and his tall silk hat. As the train slowed down he hastily grasped a suitcase and his ebony walking stick, skilfully eluded the porter and swung from the train at Bowie. He managed to slip unseen to the rear of a shed and remained concealed till the train went on.

So far all was well. There went the train, in a cloud of alkali dust, the Signor's party asleep and unaware of his defection; and here was the Signor, blithe, humming a tune, triumphant and ready for adventure.

The train to Globe, he discovered, did not leave for two hours. When he made inquiries of the loungers about the station, he found himself surrounded by a score or more of browned men in rumpled Stetsons who seemed to consider him with silent mirth. He retreated to a small bar near the station, where he called for a pint of champagne. After diligent search through his stock the proprietor found a lone, dusty bottle of the beverage—from California; and the Signor drank it, conscious that the room had filled behind him and two dozen pairs of eyes were boring into him or solemnly winking at each other. It was a wearisome two hours.

But it was seven hours more before the Signor arrived in Globe, after riding this length of time in a day coach that smelled horribly of stale tobacco. It was evening when he arrived, and the single street of the mining town seemed dingy, depressing and inhospitable. He began to long for Torquato. To his utter dismay he learned from the hotel clerk that the stage, which left the following morning, instead of making its journey in a "couple of hours," as the trainman had said, would take two days to Phoenix!

Doubt and fear assailed the Signor. Supposing his friends did not wait for him at Phoenix! He would be left alone in this country of sand and sagebrush, without his valet, to find his way alone to that far distant San Francisco. The thought gave him sudden panic. In a moment of illumination he telegraphed to the manager at Phoenix.

Three men leaned against a rude bar in the desert town of Mesa and sang "La Golondrina" in what was designed for close harmony. They were Black Mike, Willie the Kid and George Denison, whiling away time and the last of their credit at the bar, pending the departure of the stage.

Black Mike was a man of forty-five. His dusty, lusterless hair and heavy brows and mustache, of intense black shot with gray, together with his deep, close-set eyes, which wore a perpetual scowl, gave him an air of extreme feroc-

ity. He had the instinct and appearance of a desperado without a single other qualification. Indeed, the name, Black Mike, had been bestowed in irony, for Mike had once essayed to hold up a stage single-handed; whereupon a belligerent and obstreperous passenger had smashed him on the jaw and kicked him full sore, the occurrence passing into local tradition. Ribald jests were often hurled at Black Mike touching on this disastrous enterprise, and these had made him a pessimist and misanthrope.

Willie the Kid was a youth of twenty, with a slack mouth and drooping lower jaw, but a face not otherwise bad. His eyes were boyishly wistful and sentimental. He was, on the whole, a likable youth, weak and dissipated but not vicious. He had shown, so far, no marked ability toward earning a living. George Denison had left his employer's ranch three months before, tired of punching cows. He craved the excitement of towns and bars and faro layouts, and he had six hundred dollars. He meant to increase this amount by judicious playing at faro and poker, but the usual odds were against him. Somewhere in his wanderings George had picked up his two companions. They appealed to his sense of humor, and he cheerfully bought them drinks with the last of his six hundred dollars.

A fourth man, very much inebriated, hovered about. He had the appearance of a miner. Sometimes he ordered drinks for the crowd, and sometimes joined hoarsely in the music for a few notes. Between whiles he laid his head on the bar and wept copiously over his blasted life.

The stage driver, familiarly known as "Old Windy," and a stable hand, were hitching a relay of horses to the weather-beaten stage. The only through passenger was pacing back and forth to restore his circulation, sluggish from a day and a half of close confinement in the poorly upholstered interior of the coach. He was a portly man, over six feet tall, wearing a silk hat and a rich, sable-lined overcoat. Diamonds gleamed from his scarf and rings, and he

carried an ebony stick with a head of carved gold. Solomon in all his glory would have seemed no more exotic on the Arizona desert, and the Signor, placidly puffing one of his long cigarettes, instantly claimed the inebriate's attention.

"Why, look who's here!" said he. He walked gravely around the Signor, pausing every few steps to shade his eyes in ostentatious admiration. "Well—if it ain't the Dook! The Dook of Kackiack! Welcome to our—hic—" His voice trailed into silence. His eyes fixed in an amazed stare on the Signor's cigarette.

His hand suddenly reached forward to pluck the paper tube from the Signor's lips. It was a mistake. The Signor had tolerated the ridiculous banter with a smile of mild amusement; indignity was another matter. With a gesture of surprising swiftness he caught the other's arm midway and flung it aside. He seemed to use no great force, but the miner spun round, lost his footing and abruptly and violently sat down on a small, insignificant cactus.

His face assumed an agonized expression; then, with a howl of rage, he sprang to his feet, his bloodshot eyes gleaming. "Why, you damn' Dagol!" he cried. "Wha' do you mean by that? I'll learn you—" and he swung his fist at the Signor's head.

I have said that the Signor was portly. Indeed, he had achieved the stoutness of a pampered middle age; but in his youth he had been a blacksmith, and his excess of adipose tissue overlaid a fine, healthy set of muscles. Still smiling, the cigarette between his lips, he moved his head a trifle, his arm sprang upward and the fat fist at the end met the miner's face with a loud smack. The result was surprising. The inebriate shot back as though on springs, his head struck violently against the sharp edge of the wheel hub, and he fell to the ground, where he lay sprawling and unconscious. Beneath his head a dark stain spread out on the sand.

The Signor knelt beside the fallen man. His smile was replaced by a look of deepest concern and pity. He felt

the head of the inebriate, and his hand came away covered with blood.

Denison looked at his companions, a sudden light in his eye. "Keep quiet, you two," said he, "and back my play." He stooped and examined the miner's injury with a practised hand.

"He is dead—yes?" inquired the Signor.

"No," said Denison gravely. "He ain't dead—yet. All the same, this is a bad business."

Old Windy and the stableman had drawn near, and several men were running toward them. Denison turned to the stableman. "Shorty," said he, in a low voice, "stall them fellers off and get this drunken sport over to Jake's. He ain't hurt none—tore his scalp a little, that's all." He slipped his last half-dollar into the stableman's palm. "Now get your crowbait started, Windy! Are you goin' to hang around here all night?"

He grasped the Signor's arm and hustled him into the coach. His two friends followed; Old Windy mounted to his seat and the stage started. Denison addressed the Signor.

"Friend," said he, "we saw plain enough that you didn't mean no harm, but that poor man may die, and he has a heap of friends here in Mesa. They may lynch you—hang you, you understand—if we hold you here; so me and my deputies here will take you over to Phoenix, where you'll get a fair trial."

"You are, then, of the police?" inquired the Signor.

Denison took from his pocket a silver star and showed it briefly in his palm. It was a luck charm, wrought from a silver dollar by a Navajo Indian, but it looked official. The Signor nodded with understanding. "I reckon," said Denison, turning to Black Mike, "that we don't need no handcuffs on this sport, do we?"

Black Mike produced a long knife from somewhere on his person and felt the edge with his thumb. "I reckon not. Just let him start something!" and he eyed the Signor grimly.

The Signor lit another huge cigarette and thoughtfully inhaled the smoke.

He had heard of police methods in New York, but the main issue was to extricate himself from an awkward situation before meeting his friends in Phoenix. He decided, after some deliberation, that a certain system might apply both ways. Accordingly he produced a wallet, laid it on his knee and patted it caressingly. It was a fine wallet of black grain leather, monogrammed with silver, and it bulged opulently. The Signor half opened and closed it again, carelessly, and they saw that it was crammed with yellow bills. The eyes of Black Mike and Willie the Kid protruded.

"Per'aps we can arrange—yes?" suggested the Signor.

Denison leaned forward confidentially. "I'll tell you, Professor," said he; "we're sworn to do our duty, of course. But that feller back there"—he jerked his thumb in the general direction of Mesa—"is a low-down, ornery sort of a cuss. I wouldn't want to see a friend of mine hung for the likes of him. No, sir! Maybe if we was to say a few words—maybe, now; I'm only supposin'—it would make a difference. We've got a heap of influence over to Phoenix."

The Signor smiled knowingly. "How much, please?" he asked, opening the wallet.

"Hunderd and fifty apiece; not a cent less!" Black Mike barked it out before Denison could speak. George looked him sternly in the eye and he reluctantly subsided. "I reckon I got my honor to think of, ain't I? It's worth all of that," said he sulkily.

"You will please—once again, for formality, let me see your badge?" The Signor raised his eyebrows inquiringly at Denison.

George again displayed the star and the Signor nodded as though satisfied. Without more ado he counted out a hundred and fifty dollars to each man and replaced the wallet in his pocket. There were many bills left in the wallet. In fact, they seemed hardly to have diminished.

"Hold on!" said Black Mike. "How about that feller you mangled up? We got to fix it with him. It ain't no more

than right for him to get a share." He glared wickedly as he spoke.

"Of a surety; I had forgot," said the Signor courteously. He counted out two hundred dollars. "For the poor man who is 'urt, I send feefy dollars more. Is it a sufficiency, gentlemen?"

"Sure!" said Denison heartily, extending his hand. "You're clean strain, Professor, and no mistake. Let's all take a drink!" He passed the flask to the Signor, who shook his head.

"I thank you, no. Of the wheesk' I cannot drink. It is not good for the t'roat. Of the wine a little, yes; but the wheesk', I am sorry—"

"All right!" said Denison, helping himself and passing the flask to Willie the Kid. "I want to say this, Professor: you won't have no further trouble—let your mind rest on that. The party you mauled up back there is a triffin' creature anyhow. From now on we're your friends."

As the three conspirators drank, their spirits rose immoderately. And as the Signor beamed upon them from his corner the worth of the joke increased. The Signor was legitimate prey, and the prey seemed to be enjoying himself hugely. Black Mike, however, continued to glower at the Signor's diamonds and the pocket wherein reposed the fat wallet.

They finished the contents of the flask, and as Willie the Kid tossed it away he raised his quavering treble in song. Denison joined with a rich baritone and Mike with his growling bass. The song was "La Golondrina." As they paused for breath between verses, the Signor leaned forward and tapped Denison on the knee with a chubby forefinger.

"You like music?" he inquired, a twinkle in his eye. "You like to hear some?"

"Hear some?" said Willie the Kid indignantly. "You *are* hearin' some. What's the matter with that? We'll just give you some more."

"Oh! No, no!" The Signor raised a deprecating hand. "Excuse me, please; you will wait?" He opened the door and, leaning out, spoke to the

driver. Old Windy pulled up with a grumbling oath and applied the brake. The Signor mounted to a seat beside him.

"Damn it, George," said Black Mike explosively, "we ought to 'a' got more out o' that blamed snoozer. Look at all he's got left in that roll! An' them diamonds—"

"Dry up," said George.

Far off, behind the Vulture Mountains, the sun was setting and the air was chill and raw. The horses jogged along to a continued rhythm of padding hoofs, the jangling of harness trappings and the groaning and wheezing of the stage coach; but it was as though these noises were suddenly stricken silent by a wave of melody of ineffable sweetness that rose upon the air.

The song "La Golondrina" is common in the Southwest. Night riders sing it to their herds to keep them placid; Mexican serenaders whine it to their loves, and it is bawled drunkenly in dance halls and saloons. Rarely is it done even simple justice, for it is really a beautiful song; but this that fell upon the ears of the three listeners in the stage was a glorified, an apotheosized "Golondrina," grown into something wonderful beyond belief.

At the first bar Willie the Kid essayed to harmonize with the singer; then his jaw snapped shut and he sat bolt upright and rigid. Old Windy, on the driver's seat, had opened his mouth to grumble against being stopped when he was making time, across the desert. His mouth remained open and he stared, vacantly, a rill of tobacco juice running down his grizzled chin whisker.

The voice wandered from "La Golondrina" to other themes that the listeners had never heard before. They did not understand a word that fell from the singer's lips. There was no need. No education was required to know that this was not "toons," as they knew them—it was *music*! Any fool could tell it! It wasn't just a voice or a man or anything necessarily human—it was just *music*!

Willie the Kid, his elbow on the window ledge and chin in his hand, an

expired cigarette drooping from his lips, gazed sadly out over the desert. There was a real pathos in the boy's weak, wistful face. Black Mike sat huddled up, his arms tightly folded, chewing tobacco and scowling ferociously. The music fell into low, crooning notes. "Them diamonds, now—" he began.

"Shut up—damn you!" snapped Denison.

George was listening with all his ears. There was a lover in a garden. The garden was flooded with sunlight, and somewhere near by a girl was hidden, listening shyly as her lover sang of his love, his voice throbbing with the passion of young manhood. Free and true, as mellow and irresistible as a bird's in springtime, the voice trilled on, till it ended in a heart-stirring sob of ecstasy as his love stepped forth and he caught her in his arms.

And now it was the gloomy courtyard of a castle, or it might have been a church—no matter—and it was evening, and everything was cold and gray and dismal so that the heart despaired. And the man was singing again, holding something in his arms—a woman or a child—something he loved above all the world—and his voice was infinitely sad at first, rising as it went on as though in protest at some awful injustice, till it was terrible in its anguish. It ended again in a sob, low, with the madness of despair—the cry of one beyond hope or pity; and Denison knew that the woman, or child, that the man held in his arms was dead!

Willie the Kid was sobbing aloud. Denison felt a queer ache in his throat and a catching of his breath, and he reached forward and gently patted the forlorn boy on the shoulder. Never since his childhood had he been guilty of such a weakness, and he turned quickly to Black Mike. That worthy was leaning forward, elbows on knees and face resting on his tightly clenched fists, scowling fearfully. Yet a solitary tear had fallen from his glowering eye and run down his weather-beaten cheek. With a sharp curse he struck it away with his fist. Denison suddenly laughed aloud.

The stage stopped and the Signor stepped within. "Well," said he cheerily, a broad smile on his face, "how you like my music—eh?"

For a moment no one spoke. Willie the Kid, still looking out over the desert, fumbled in his pocket and brought forth some yellow bills. He held them toward the Signor without looking round. "Here, boss," said he. "Put 'em away. I cain't take your money."

Denison's eye lit with approval. He had already produced his own share of the Signor's money. "Take it back, sir," said he quietly. "We were just jokin' with you. I ain't no sheriff, and even if I was I wouldn't take this from you."

Black Mike had retreated into his corner. His lower jaw was working industriously and he seemed to be struggling with himself. Denison turned a cold eye on him and nudged him fiercely with his elbow. The disqualified bandit, with obvious reluctance, took a crumpled wad of bills from his vest pocket and tossed it to the Signor.

It had grown dark and the lights of Phoenix were close at hand. The Signor thrust the money carelessly into his coat pocket, threw back his head and laughed heartily. "Ah—ah—ah!" he gasped, between gusts of mirth. "I see! I understand! I am w'at you call the 'tenderfoot,' eh—and you joke weeth me! You are not of the police! And it is not that you pay me for my little concert. For the money it would be too cheap!" Again his smooth laughter rang. "No, no! You are honest gentlemen, and it is w'at you call the laugh on me! Gentlemen, my compliments!" He shook hands with them and sat back, a chuckle now and then rising from the depths. It was infectious; they laughed with him; only on Denison's face was a slight shade of perplexity.

Suddenly the Signor held out his hand clasped over something he had taken from his pocket. "My friend," said he to Denison, "I show you somesing. That badge of the police you 'ave! I buy one myself from Indian man at Mesa. See!" and he showed it on his open palm. Denison's face immediately turned a rich, dark red.

A chorus of feminine shrieks greeted the stage coach. As the Signor projected his head from the window he was instantly seized and embraced by plump white arms. When he stepped out he was surrounded by two score men and women calling his name and shrieking hysterically in French and Italian, while the manager shook his head in sad reproach. "*Méchant!*" said he. "You have ruined our schedule." The Signor had achieved his desired effect.

One of the men—no other than Francati—rushed forward and, to the horrified surprise of Black Mike, Denison and Willie the Kid, kissed the Signor on both cheeks. With but a single backward toss of his hand to his late companions, the singer was borne away to the joyous acclamations of the whole company.

"Well, did you see that?" said Black Mike. "Kissed him! Twicet he done it!"

"Humph!" said Denison. "Did you hear 'em call his name? I know now what he meant by sayin' he gave us a cheap concert. That feller's the champion tenor singer of the world. He gets twenty-five hundred a night for no more than he gave us out there."

"He's worth it," said Willie the Kid. "He sure can make pleasant noises."

As they walked away the boy took Denison's arm shyly. "George," said he, "I'm goin' back to Texas. I reckon I'm man enough to play my hand there. I'm sick of this hellin' around."

"Go to it, Kid! There really ain't any good sense in this philanderin'. Now, boys, if I can find Andy Lee, my old foreman, in town, I'll shake him down for enough for us to eat and sleep on. Tomorrow I'm goin' to cut loose and go back to my job."

"Mebbe, if I may make so free," said Black Mike, with sarcasm, "you two longhorns can quit these plans for a happy future long enough to take a drink."

"I give my last half-dollar to Shorty, over at Mesa, for that party with the souse," said Denison. "We're shy the price."

"Huh!" Black Mike extracted a crumpled wad from his pocket. "Think so, eh? Well, you're wrong. While that Dago had you two goin' with his ranikaboo, I held out a hundred bucks on him. After seein' that feller kiss him"—Mike spat in the road disgustedly—"I wisht I'd held it all out. Come on!"



WILD SWANS

By Skipwith Cannell

THE wild swans call from out the night
 Like poor lost spirits far from home,
 And witch my soul to taking flight,
 A phantom ship athwart the night.
 O pallid fleets that restless roam
 In restless flight o'er pallid foam,
 By black swans were you called at night
 Like my poor spirit, far from home.

THE MULE DRIVER

By Henry Herbert Knibbs

THE clack and clatter of the chain, the staggering pull to top the crest,
The brakeline slack; below, the plain and twenty mules, in pairs, abreast.

The heated tires that grind and smoke, the nimble leaders swinging wide;
The swirls of powdered dust that choke and curl along the mountain side.

Careless of poise and keen of eye, the skinner of the wheeler's back
Condemns his mules expressively, and takes a little jerkline slack.

"Roll on, old wagon; we're going home. Hump, you buckskins! Hop it along!
Jump, you Jerry-old-Jeroboam! Listen! I'll sing you a little song:

*"Oh, I had a girl in San Antone;
She had a beau lived down that way.
I met up with him one night alone. . . .
That's why I'm skinning mules today!*

*"There was a hoss in San Antone;
I borrowed that hoss and come away,
Fanning it fast on the white-faced roan. . . .
That's why I'm skinning mules today!"*

The blind wheel creeps along the rut; the slow sand follows up the tire,
The distance shows a herder's hut below the ridge in sunset fire;

As o'er the grim, wheel-gutted plain, silent beneath its weary years,
The mules plod on with grunt and strain, with nodding heads and swinging ears.

A cowboy turns and waves his hand; then with the twinkle of his spur
Rides slowly toward the foothill land, a lone and proud adventurer;

But reins and listens, nods and smiles with head aslant as low and long
Across the hushed and stagnant miles he hears the echo of a song:

*"I ain't going back to San Antone;
Haven't got time to go down that way,
For I got a girl and a kid of my own;
That's why I'm skinning mules today!*

*"Skinning mules on the old Tejon;
Believe me, sister, it ain't no play;
But I got a girl and a kid of my own;
That's why I'm skinning mules today!"*

LE JUSTICIER

Par Jean de Kerlecq

L'EAU commençait à tomber en grosses gouttes chaudes, les noctambules se réfugiaient précipitamment dans les restaurants de nuit dont les façades rutilaient sous un débordement d'ampoules électriques: il était deux heures du matin; les ailes du Moulin-Rouge s'étaient paresseusement arrêtées, mais, sur le boulevard de Clichy, quelques cabarets prétendus artistiques s'obstinaient, à attendre la clientèle.

Deux agents longeaient le boulevard, d'un pas tranquille, de la place Blanche à la place Pigalle; le sol résonnait sous leurs talons ferrés, et les miséreux, auxquels ce bruit était familier, s'empres- saient de quitter le banc sur lequel, pour un instant, ils s'étaient reposés.

Cette fuite apeurée amusait l'un des sergents de ville, grand gaillard à forte moustache, ayant tout l'aspect d'un lutteur de foire; il se tourna vers son compagnon et remarqua:

— Voilà les lièvres qui détalent.

L'autre, homme d'un certain âge, à physionomie triste et grave, parut sortir d'un rêve:

— Oui, fit-il pour toute réponse.

— Si nous n'y mettions le holà, reprit le premier, les boulevards se trouveraient, la nuit, changés en dortoirs.

— A tout prendre, répliqua le rêveur, cela ne gênerait personne.

Le géant s'arrêta, surpris:

— Daumier, c'est vous qui parlez ainsi?

— Notez bien, reprit l'agent, que je ne critique pas les ordonnances de police que je suis, comme vous, chargé de faire respecter; mais je constate que, s'il est nécessaire d'empêcher durant le jour, que les bancs soient accaparés par des

loqueteux, il me paraît inutile de les en chasser la nuit puisqu'ils ne font de tort à personne. Voilà des gens qui ne savent où reposer, on les chasse de partout; ne pourrait-on pas, tandis que chacun dort au fond d'un lit moelleux, leur laisser la jouissance des ponts ou des bancs inoccupés?

— Je ne vous savais pas si indulgent.

— Mon Dieu, je suis vieux; j'ai souffert; j'ai pensé; et tout cela rend meilleur . . . Vous êtes jeune, vous ne connaissez que le règlement, moi aussi, sans doute! . . . mais on peut l'appliquer sans sévérité et n'en être pas moins un bon agent. Ainsi tenez, moi, j'ai la vue basse—c'est l'âge encore!—et la nuit je ne vois pas à dix mètres; par conséquent, il ne m'est pas possible de distinguer si un banc est ou n'est pas agrémenté d'un dormeur et comme je ne suis pas autrement pressé de le savoir, je m'en tiens toujours à une certaine distance.

— Farceur!

Daumier eut un sourire un peu triste:

— Je n'ai jamais été aussi sérieux.

L'eau, maintenant, tombait plus fort; des passants attardés fuyaient sous la pluie; de rares fiacres passaient traînés par des chevaux au trot mélancolique, et les cochers, sur leur siège, disparaissaient dans l'engoncement des couvertures, des cache-nez et des manteaux.

Facétieux, le gros agent fredonna:

Soleil de mail Soleil de mes amours!

Puis, tout à coup, une rafale s'étant élevée:

— Mettons-nous à l'abri! dit-il.

Ils se retirèrent précipitamment sous la tente d'un café:

Revenant à son idée, Daumier observa:

— Croyez-vous qu'il sont bien, ceux qui ne savent où aller par un temps pareil?

— Nous sommes bien dehors.

— Sans doute; mais, quand nous aurons terminé notre service, nous rentrerons chez nous et nous trouverons des vêtements secs, un bon lit et de quoi nous reconforter.

Il y eut un silence; le grand garçon réfléchissait en taquinant l'extrémité de sa moustache; puis, il ne trouva, pour traduire sa pensée, que ces mots:

— Daumier, vous n'étiez pas né pour faire un agent.

— On ne suit pas toujours la vocation qu'on aurait désirée! il y a des circonstances dans la vie sur lesquelles on ne comptait pas et qui se chargent de bouleverser nos projets. On ne nait pas pour faire quelque chose, on fait ce qu'on peut; et si j'ai perdu cette sévérité qui fait votre orgueil c'est que j'ai trop vu de misères.

Soudain, perçant les demi ténèbres de la nuit, un agent-cycliste apparut; il aperçut ses collègues et leur cria:

— Vitel! vitel! on assassine passage de l'Elysée-des-Beaux-Arts; courez-y!

Au moment où au pas de gymnastique ils s'engageaient dans le passage, un cri de douleur et de détresse troua le silence écrasant de la nuit.

— Hâtons-nous, dit Daumier.

— Révolver au poing, surenchérit le colosse.

Ils se trouvèrent bientôt devant un hôtel meublé de sordide apparence. Dans le couloir à peine éclairé, tout un groupe hurlait, se débattait, et des gémissements faisaient, à ce concert lugubre, un poignant accompagnement.

Une femme blessée était accroupie sur l'une des marches de l'escalier. En bas, un poignard à la main, un homme jeune luttait contre plusieurs agents.

Et le bandit hurlait plus fort, menaçant de son arme ceux qui tentaient de l'approcher:

— Tous! . . . tous, jusqu'au dernier.

Daumier écarta ses camarades:

— Laissez-moi faire, dit-il.

— Mais vous êtes fou, il va vous tuer!

Daumier ne répondit pas, il se fraya un passage à travers ses collègues et,

venant se planter devant le bandit, il dit, en le regardant dédaigneusement:

— Allons . . . frappe!

Le misérable recula, ses yeux, tout à coup, avaient pris une expression de terreur; il laissa tomber son arme . . .

Il y eut, parmi les agents, une minute de stupeur, puis une ruée:

— Les menottes!

Daumier, d'un geste, arrêta ses collègues:

— Laissez-moi, dit-il.

Il y avait tant de fermeté dans cette voix, tant de noblesse et d'assurance dans l'attitude de Daumier, que les agents obéirent.

Le bandit, en proie à une terreur folle, reculait toujours, montant l'escalier, face à ses agresseurs; il heurta la blessée dont la pâleur allait s'accroissant et s'arrêta, comme hypnotisé par le regard de l'agent.

Daumier, tranquillement, arma son revolver et visa le criminel avant que personne n'ait eu le temps d'intervenir.

— Meurs, misérable, dit-il.

Le bandit, touché en pleine poitrine, tomba; et ses yeux épouvantés ne quittaient plus le justicier impassible. Un flot de sang afflua à ses lèvres et roula jusque sur ses vêtements; puis, atteint sans doute aux sources de la vie, il tomba aux côtés de sa première victime.

Daumier avait jeté son revolver.

Les agents s'empressèrent autour de leurs camarades blessés; puis, le commissaire ayant paru, chacun se rangea le long du corridor.

— Le coupable! interrogea le magistrat.

Un agent désigna le bandit qui s'agitait encore dans un spasme final.

— Qui l'a tué?

Daumier releva la tête et montra son rude visage inondé de larmes.

— Moi! dit-il.

— Vous avez bien fait, reprit le commissaire, et je vous félicite . . . mais . . . pourquoi pleurez-vous?

Le justicier eut un geste d'une infinie tristesse, et, d'une voix qui laissait deviner la révolte de sa chair et sa déroute intérieure:

— C'était mon fils! . . . dit-il.

Tous les agents se découvrirent.

THE MIRACLE IN THIRTY-NINTH STREET WEST

By George Jean Nathan

I HAVE, in my period, contemplated many a stupefying, many a brain-staggering, theatrical phenomenon. For instance, I have seen—fifteen years ago, I think it was—a play actor who, having to find a passage in some book during the enactment of a drama, did not locate the place immediately he opened the volume. On another memorable occasion—I was quite young at the time—I recall having seen an actress in an ingénue role who did not essay to heighten her girlish cunningness by sitting down with one of her feet tucked under her; and on another long to be remembered occasion when, still in kilts, I was privileged a matinee in the company of my governess, I recollect having seen a play in which the young actor playing the part of a college man did not delineate the role by shaking hands frequently and impulsively with all the other male actors. On the night of February 8, 1891, I beheld an emotional actress play the entire tear-filled, grief-laden climax of a drama on her feet, without once either falling on her knees or rolling around on the floor. And from the night of November 16, 1889, I still treasure in memory the view of an actor who, called on by the manuscript to "suffer in silence," did not make to interpret his sad condition by giving periodic vent to a grim, cynical little laugh.

Nor have the miracles been restricted wholly to actors. Although I have small faith that I shall be believed, I yet confess to having once seen a play containing a faithful old servant in which, when the hero lost his fortune, the faithful old servant did not in a pathetic scene urge

his master to permit him to help him out with the forty-eight dollars he had saved up. Also have I seen a comedy in which the young lovers, just about to kiss, were not surprised in the act by the unexpected entrance of one of the older characters, the latter thereupon with lovable sympathy giving a significant cough and elaborately busying himself with the papers on the table in the pretense of having not noticed. Also a melodrama in which at no time one of the characters suddenly stood still, motioned his companion for silence, crept on tiptoe to the door, paused a moment and then quickly pulled the door open to surprise an eavesdropper (who, incidentally, nine times out of ten, is never there). And once—it was some dozen years ago as I remember—I was actually witness of a play containing a detective in which at no point in the action were the lights suddenly switched off by someone in order to provoke a thrill.

Ah, yes, mine has been an eventful life. Think of it. On the night of March 14, 1903, I even heard an actor pronounce the word "mademoiselle" correctly! On the night of September 27, 1896, I heard every word of the part an actor was reciting—and I seated 'way back in the second row! On the night of January 4, 1900, only fourteen years ago, I beheld an actor deliver a line of seven words and, during the process of delivery, employ only four gestures! At a matinee on April 21, 1907, I saw a play laid in the tenement district in which the heroine's father was not a drunkard and in which the heroine's sister was not low with consumption! On the night

of October 2, 1888, I attended a play in which the hero did not bluff the villain by proclaiming, "Meet me here at ten o'clock tomorrow morning and I'll have the money to pay you *every* cent I owe you!" subsequently, upon being interrogated by his friend as to how he was possibly going to accomplish it, replying, "Damned if I know." At a matinee on September 29, 1894 (I can remember the date well—it was Michaelmas Day), I saw a play in which the fact that the leading female character was supposed to possess "temperament" was not illustrated by the playwright by having the woman one moment vociferously vituperate her maid and the next call her back and present her casually with a handsome bauble from out her jewel case—"Take it, Suzette; 'twill look well on you. There, there, say nothing! Go—leave me alone—you annoy me!" On the night of February 11, 1901—but enough of adventures with what, however imposing, are after all comparatively no more than trifling miracles, no more than paltry prodigies, no more than nugatory supernaturalisms.

For, sweeping against these one and all and blowing them before it into oblivion with the mighty wind of ten typhoons, twenty simoons, thirty siroccos, forty hurricanes or one Drama League official, comes a play written by an actor for his own use—and staged for that actor by another actor!—which nevertheless, from curtain to curtain, fails persistently to disclose any trace of (1) a scene wherein the actor who wrote the play for his own use, single-handed and armed only with a stylish dress suit, defies the villain and his jackals to dare so much as *touch* the heroine!—meanwhile emphasizing his perfect coolness by puffing nonchalantly at a cigarette; (2) a series of prefatory scenes wherein all the other characters are made to work up an entrance for the actor who wrote the play for himself by referring to him repeatedly as "that strong, handsome brute" and with such observations as "Well, whatever they may say against him, he's a *man*!" and such amorous encomiums as "Oh, what

would I not give to have one as noble, as generous, as manly as he take me in his big strong arms and protect me from the world, and love me!" or (3) a valet who is made by the actor who wrote the play for himself to help aforesaid actor in and out of his purple velvet smoking jacket, the object being to let the audience know that aforesaid actor is really a gentleman "on and off."

Pause a moment and reflect. A play of such parentage that has in it not a single touching passage about "mother love"; not a passage indicating the leading actor's perfect familiarity with Biarritz, the placid-Mediterranean-turquoise-under-the-August-skies, and Lord Allonhurst's (with a significant wink) gay yachting parties; not a passage (directed at the man servant) as "*C'est bien, Jenkins, mais aidez-moi plutôt à mettre mon pantalon*" to prove that the actor who devised the play for his personal use is a French scholar! In it—imagine!—no scene wherein the actor, in white silk blouse open at the throat and with sleeves rolled up, poses rapier in hand before the entrance to the Taverne du Lion d'Or and, thrusting the fair Thérèse de Valois behind him, defends her "honor" with his life, by the dim light of candelabra held aloft eventually disarming and putting to rout not only the traitorous Duc ("the best swordsman in all France") but his hirelings as well! In it—think you!—a hero who is not finally discovered to be related, even illegitimately, to Napoleon!!

The miracle? "Too MANY COOKS," by name. The author and chief interpreter? Mr. Frank Craven. The scene? The Thirty-ninth Street Theater. Narrating simply, unaffectedly and with a sharp appreciation of the humors resident in the materials, the adventures of a vulgar young lower middle class clerk coincident with building a small house in the suburbs wherein to house his bride-to-be, the piece is not only suggestive, in several of its major local phases, of the playful viewpoint attaching to the memory of Charles Hoyt, but, more than this, it attains in recurring flashes of humorous characterization and genial philosophy to the quality of Ade.

In its entirety, this little farce comedy is so absurdly incomplex and innocent that, withdrawing from its contemplation, one is at first deluded into a depreciation of its merits, merits that subsequently must present themselves with some considerable force in a day when the contributors to the native theater are either little more than preposterous pilferers of foreign goods which they seek archly but vainly to infuse with a local vitality or mere virtuosi of original slipslops. This Craven, setting out to write "an American play," unlike the rank and file of his current rivals in this omnipresent and generally unsavoury *divertissement*, refrained from bequeathing to his "American play" the conventional essentials of the countless "American plays" that the proletariat is half-paged into regarding with serious awe—to wit, such distinctively American ingredients as a German ethical viewpoint, a French "punch," an Austro-Hungarian concupiscence and an English butler.

Another thing. Craven's "technique." *Dei gratia*, he has none—at least in the sense which our critical column fillers so lovingly stroke the word. His play folk amble on and off the stage without paying any attention whatever to what technicians would have us believe is the first law of all human conduct: always, that is, to specify precisely where one is going and why before one leaves the presence of another, and to explain where one has been and why when one makes his reappearance. Nor do his play characters hesitate at doors to deliver themselves of brilliant, cutting repartee, nor do they maneuver intricately in and out of half a dozen exits and entrances such as French windows, stairways, verandas and the like arbitrarily to decorate the action of the play. They seem to realize—with the bare two exits and entrances that Craven has allowed them—that, in actual life and in the actual world, there is probably not more than one room or one houseyard or one what-not in a hundred in which the persons immediately figuring make use of more than one or two means of ingress and egress. Show me the playwright who utilizes from four

to six doors or other entrances and exits in his acts and, generally speaking, I will show you a concocter of bad plays—or a writer of French farce, which is usually the same thing.

Do I seem absurdly to ladle out overpraise on the head of the sire of this little play? Well, well, I trust not, for it deserves no so fluent and copious a dose of gravy. Yet if I have been led somewhat rashly to explode too many pinwheels and nigger chasers in this Craven's honor, I have as my apology the sudden reaction in me provided by his play against the leaky native twattle that has been abusing our theatrical eyes this season long. When one encounters such a likable reticence, such a genuineness and thoroughly sound derivation of humor and such a frank, conscious display of bad manners as is to be approached in the play of which speech is here being made, it is privileged the critic to omit reference, in this day and hour of our dramatic famine, to mere defects and flaws. From these the play is not exempt. It is unduly repetitious in its episodes; it is given now and again to the familiar practice of mental Coo and Coddle, the silly sentimentality without which no American-made play seems possible of birth. But, with these faults and its several others, the play (with the novel scenic notion of showing a house in the three stages of building—first, the foundation, then the framework and lastly the finished product) is still instrumental in providing theatergoers with an evening of happy relief from the theater.

Why Mr. Augustin MacHugh's play, "WHAT WOULD YOU DO?" scored so precipitous a failure in New York, I am at a loss to comprehend. In the first place, it was such a very bad play. Mr. MacHugh, who, before he achieved success with the farce "Officer 666," was a play actor, was unfortunately unable, judging from the contour of his play, to forget the circumstance as his former colleague Craven had in his own case contrived adroitly to forget it. What the result? Behold the situation so close to the hearts of the Vaughan Glasers of the hinterland stock companies—wife in

lover's arms, enter husband! Behold the situation that makes the Corse Paytons leave home—telephone . . . Stock Exchange . . . Consolidated Preferred down 190 points . . . "My God, I'm ruined!" . . . "What's that? Market recovering? Up 340 points? Thank God! Saved!!" Behold the dear old scene in which husband "loses control of himself," throws extravagant, pleasure-loving wife to her knees and Then Tells Her She Is No Better Than The Painted Women You See On The Streets! Behold the now celebrated last act, laid in the country—"How wonderful it is out here! It's like a different life, Bob, after the sordidness and misery of the city"—with wife returning penitently at ten to eleven in a Simple Dress. And, pervading all, behold the inevitable *unconscious* evil manners.

Why is it that when all but four of the writers for the American stage set out to deal with characters presumed to be moderately well-bred, the manners they attribute to such characters are disclosed to be on a par with the manners of stable boys and persons of secure social position? To say that the writers fail in portraying good manners through the medium of their characters because they themselves may be ill-bred is vapid argument: Oscar Wilde, a *maestro* of proscenium manners, had the personal manners of a fellow in trade; Richard Brinsley Sheridan, whose dramatic characters are models of form, was, so history informs us, possessed of a prime loutishness in personal conduct; and I have heard whispered in the alehouses that Pinero, whose play characters are ever so thoroughly *en règle* that they aggravate one, not only tucks a serviette under his chin and chases the nomadically inclined French pea which happens to wander from the saucer over the tablecloth, but, in a major way, may be said generally to make up his manners as he goes along. Craven's play delights one's soul because, as has been observed, its bad manners impress the spectator as being deliberate and conscious. MacHugh's play set the teeth on edge because its characters tried elaborately to be what the New York theatrical public

would think was "society" and succeeded only in being what is actually "society."

Having seen many plays, it follows as obvious that I have seen many badly acted plays. "WHAT WOULD YOU DO?" was interpreted with so stunning a lack of histrionic ability on the part of the mummery engaged in a hand-to-hand conflict with its parts of speech that the applause for the actors on the opening night was deafening. What is applause? Crossing the sea last summer in a ship numbering in its passenger list forty-six recognized music lovers—persons well known in New York for their intelligent devotion to opera, symphony concerts, recitals—I had reason to reflect. Each night, in the large saloon on the promenade deck, these forty-six gathered with the rest of the ship to listen to one of the new instruments that so wonderfully, so uncannily, reproduces to the most humble detail the interpretation of rare musical compositions by the best pianists of the current era. It has been agreed and is agreed—and it has been *proved*—by able critics that were one of the famous pianists to seat himself behind a screen and play, and that were subsequently the instrument to reproduce his playing behind another screen, the listener would be unable to determine which of the performances had come from the human hand, which from the mechanical. This night, the forty-six listened to Paderewski—or, more accurately, to the reproduced Paderewski. The forty-six were silent, enraptured, enthralled. The playing stopped. There was not a handclap from the forty-six. Nor a handclap, a murmur, a sound, for that matter, from anyone else. And then it was that I came to wonder if applause, after all, is not ever less a tribute to work well done than a sop to the empty personal vanity and jack-assish conceit of public performers?

The nature of the American is such that he is quick to view as fact anything that is all fiction and equally quick to deny as at all possible of existence anything that is partly fiction. Mr. George Scarborough early in the present season wrote and caused to be produced a play

given the title "The Lure," a play whose theme was derived with a whoop from the white slave mythology so popular and persuasive at the moment. Being wholly fable, so far as its intent, generalization and thematic vitality went, the play was hailed by the cognoscenti of the press as "searching in its truthful and vivid portrayal of an existing and terrifying state of affairs." Of the piece, indeed, the reviewer for the *Evening Sun* went so far as to record: "From first to last, it rings true! . . . The truest act since the big act of 'The Easiest Way'! . . . Its sincerity something which cannot be denied. . . . It strikes a big, timely and human note. . . . Covers whole white slave question honestly!" This same Mr. Scarborough recently produced a piece called "THE LAST RESORT," the theme of which was derived (true enough, with no less a whoop than in the previous instance) from the late disclosures that brought about the genesis of the movement concerning the recall of judges, but a theme none the less which carried at bottom a truth as truthful as the falsity of that of "The Lure" was false.

What happened? Because his thesis was melodramatized with a somewhat more conspicuous laying on of paprika externals than he had negotiated in the case of his earlier play, and because his theme was thus caused more transparently to exhale the vapors of part-fiction instead of, as in his previous work, deftly repressing the complete thematic fiction, the entire shebang, good and bad lumped together, was committed to the lunacy ward. What a queer coccus is the "criticism" practised by our daily journals! Cast an eye, for example, upon the following rare specimen recently culled by Eustachio, my negro, from that strange pamphlet called the *New York Times Review of Books*:

Experience has shown that the better the drama the less of what is distinctively literary it contains. Mr. Shaw—to refer to the inevitable name—is the only one of recent writers who has managed to make some of his plays real literature, but only by the process of robbing them of real dramatic quality. A simple example, with which most of us have become recently familiar by the excellent elocution of

Forbes-Robertson, may illustrate the point. When Caesar rolls out that fine address to the Sphinx, in "Caesar and Cleopatra," that is literature, but it is not drama; when Cleopatra calls out to him, "Old gentleman," that is drama, but it is not literature.

What toothsome pishmince! From first E to final e, nonsense *en casserole*, flappedoodle *ou naturel*, wind *en gelée*. And yet such stuff is printed—and taken seriously, I doubt not, by many.

It would appear to the lay eye that the chief trouble with Mr. Scarborough as a writer for the theater is that he possesses an unmistakable knack for the theater. Which is to say that he thinks in terms of heroes and villains, "punches" and "suspense," thrilling denouements and telling "curtains." From such a mind, whatever drama emanates must inevitably bear the plague spots of artificiality and hyperbole. Mr. Scarborough is by Charles Klein out of Owen Davis. His characters are not human—even before the actors begin impersonating them. His characters seem to say even while they are delivering the playwright's lines: "Pretty zippy dialogue old Scarborough has given us, don't you think?" His "curtains," as the stage argot has it, "plant" themselves so speciously that their effect is gone before they arrive. His heroes are so ungovernably heroic that, by five minutes to nine, every discriminating person in the audience is rooting for the villains. And his villains are so consistently villainous that, beside them, even Paul Armstrong's celebrated dirty workers take on the visage of angels of heaven. Many a possibly valid theme, such as the one presented in his latest play, is Scarborough destined to devastate if he persists in adhering to this Broadway theatrical ritual, the ritual which orders that all life be seen through the glasses of "what will go in the theater," the ritual that thinks from the stage back to life instead of from life toward the stage. The ritual, in short, that would define, let us say, Socialism as "Any theory or system of social organization which would abolish, entirely or in great part, the individual effort and competition on which modern society rests, and substitute for it coöperative action,

would introduce a more perfect and equal distribution of the products of labor, would make land and capital, as the instruments and means of production, the joint possession of the members of the community, and would cause Jane Cowl to love George Fawcett and marry him in the last act."

The story materials of "THE LAST RESORT" begin with the corruption of a trial judge by a rapsallion of a corporation lawyer, said corporation being desirous of sequestering a particularly active legal opponent in jail. The scene changes to the courtroom and we observe the subsidized member of the bench provoking the objectionable party—who is our little hero—into an open contempt of court, thereupon consigning him by way of punishment to serve sentence. Our hero takes an appeal, and we next find ourselves in the private consultation room of the Appellate Court, six weeks later. Attention to the plot is here temporarily interrupted by the presence on the scene, in an otherwise unimportant role of court stenographer, of an awfully pretty little blonde girl with wonderful blue eyes. After a while, several minutes after this rare creature has made her exit, one begins to notice that there have been present all the time two other characters. It presently obtrudes upon one that these two characters are judges of the higher court, equally as corrupt as was our accommodating friend of the first act. The rapsallion of a corporation lawyer enters and persuades the two bad men to keep our hero in the lock-up. Then—bismillah!—out of a telephone booth near by steps our little heroine. She has heard ALL—not merely all, mind you, but ALL! Being an old hand at melodramas, however, we immediately realize that it will do neither our heroine nor our hero much good—this having heard ALL, that is—because our old friend "Suspense" will demand that our heroine be arbitrarily thwarted by the villains so as to tide the audience over to the next act. In this next act, our hero is elected governor of the State and, losing his head in the excitement of the moment, asks our heroine to marry him. Inasmuch, there-

fore, as his troubles are now about to start with doubled force, this constitutes a happy ending.

"ALONG CAME RUTH," an adaptation of Fonsoon and Wicheler's "La Demoiselle de Magazin," projected by Henry W. Savage at the Gaiety, is of the depressing species of theatrical entertainment generally described as "wholesome"—obviously meaning, so far as one can make out, full of holes. It is the invariable custom of our theatrical appraisers to designate as wholesome any play (1) that is laid in the country and has a rainstorm for a "curtain" to one of its acts; (2) that contains the spectacle of a little girl at death's door begging her grief-stricken mother not to be sad because "I'm goin' to get well an' strong again, mamma; the doctor tol' me so," when the audience has been apprised that there is no hope for the invalid; (3) that contains several touching references to Christmas; (4) that discloses the fact in the last act that the little heroine is not an illegitimate child, after all, her father having duly married her mother before he left on that fatal trip to sea; and (5) that does not imperil the heroine's physical chastity. It is, of course, a vital essential of all of these "wholesome" dramas that they prevent their audiences from thinking, their wholesomeness being proportioned to their proficiency in this direction. A study of the New York newspaper critiques of the last ten years uncovers the intelligence that only once has the adjective "wholesome" been employed therein to describe the work of a first rate or even second or third rate dramatist, the flattery having been reserved exclusively for the output of the metaphysicians of piffle. The one exception noted occurred in the instance of Barrie's "Peter Pan." Who in this land has heard of a Shaw play described as wholesome? Or a Galsworthy play (even "The Pigeon")? Or a play by Knoblauch, Walter, Bahr, Molnar, Pintero, Hauptmann, Schnitzler, Brieux, Sudermann, Giacosa, Echegaray?

"ALONG CAME RUTH" is evidently "wholesome" by virtue of the fifth clause in the critical book of rules—the

corporeal sacrosanctity of our heroine. Our heroine is a superficial, hence amiably natured, little baggage who comes as clerk in Act I to a village store in Maine, and before you can say Jack Robinson—or, in this case, Winchell Smith—succeeds in transforming the store into an emporium and the village into a metropolis. On the stage, the only thing that can be reformed more quickly than a down-at-the-heel store or village is a criminal. Just why this play should have been called wholesome and the designation withheld from the recent vastly wittier and similarly themed William Collier piece, "A Little Water on the Side" (heroine preserved intact as per rule), is as baffling as the other elements in the conventional procedure. The first act scene of the Fenson-Wicheler adaptation is laid in "Hubbard's furniture shop in Oldport, Maine," and the second, according to the program, in the "Hubbard-Bradford department store," but, actually, in the palace of the Crown Prince of Saxonborgia or some such erstwhile Savage musical comedy setting. This managerial habit of resorting so frequently to the storehouse for scenery may well be applauded on the ground of economy, but it is rather disconcerting to an audience's powers of imagination. Not long ago, for instance, while witnessing a play produced by Mr. William A. Brady and called "Don't Weaken," I found myself waiting impatiently for the entrance of Grace George. Unable finally to contain my disquietude, I begged of the man with me a possible reason for the actress's delayed appearance. "But," said he, glancing at his playbill and making certain, "Grace George is not in the cast." I smiled, indulgent at the fellow's ignorance. "Ho!" I exclaimed. "You can't fool me! Grace George is *always* in this scene!"

Finding nothing in "ALONG CAME RUTH" as a play to hold my attention, I devoted the period spent in the cozy, warm theater (it was very cold out of doors) to speculating upon several irrelevant but highly interesting philosophies. Thus, during the first of the three acts, I brought myself to the conclusion that

the reason for the large financial success of such plays as "Damaged Goods" and the like is to be found fundamentally in the one psychologic fact that they provide, through the articulation of a word or words generally hushed by the edict of conventionality, the aural stimulus—the ear shock—the sound concussion—the ear emotion—with which the public has been unable previously to gratify its auditory sense. That is to say, where the theatergoing public has had its cardiac and ocular sensations and emotions provided for by the managers, where it has been able to find and in due time to tire of heart and eye thrills (induced respectively, for example, by such exhibits as "Madame X" and the Hippodrome shows), it has not until lately been provided with ear thrills. (Music is to be excepted as, remember, it is only of drama we are here treating!) When, therefore (as I figured out while Ruth was selling a big order of furniture to old Captain Hodge, the village grouch), there is given to the public a play containing such a tympanum stimulus as is contained in the direction against the ear drum of the hitherto unspoken word "syphilis," the public will rush to the play to receive that sensation as it would, does and has rushed to such exhibits as the Ziegfeld "Follies" to receive new physical stimuli.

During the second act (while young Allan Hubbard was beseeching Ruth to be his wife and while Ruth, who loved him greatly, was refusing him on the ground that there had to be a third act), I ruminated over the abject futility of any and all attempts to establish "atmosphere" in the minds of a theater audience before the rise of the curtain. By conveying thus in advance to the audience the sound of birds singing in the woodland, the sound of rain and thunder, or something of the sort, that is. Never once has such an attempt been successful. Why this should be so, I was unable to figure out because the traffic on the stage was making too much noise. Belasco, in his theater in Forty-fourth Street West, accomplishes more in the way of guaranteeing the mood of his audiences through the sim-

ple expedient of preserving a gentle quiet in the house, a sense of expectant hush, than have any of his colleagues with their attempts toward establishing an ante-curtain mood through such preliminary "atmospheric" bosh as a character playing the piano or some darkies singing in the distance. No "atmosphere" on earth is powerful enough to push its way through the drop curtain.

During the last act (while old Papa Hubbard was provoking the audience to great mirth by simulating a condition of intoxication), I set myself to wondering why it never occurs to our more discerning stage producers to command their actor charges in rehearsal to refrain from indulging in the nine hundred and ninety-nine of the usual thousand mummer gestures that assault an audience's optic nerve during the course of almost every play given to the public. Aside from the patent fact that this ceaseless gesturing diminishes to no inconsiderable extent the verisimilitude of a play, does it not occur to the producers that the only persons who make use of gestures are persons deficient in the power of intelligent expression—or Polacks and political speakers, which amounts to the same thing? Forasmuch as actors—I am speaking of plays in general—are supplied with this power of expression by the playwright, where the need of gestures? One gesture, to be sure, sometimes emphasizes a point; but two gestures, just as surely, obfuscate it. When a person off the stage catches sight of the lunar body and remarks, "Isn't the moon beautiful tonight?" does he accompany his observation with an elaborate maneuver with his anterior limb? Not unless he is drunk! Why then, when an actor is called upon to execute a similar remark in a play, should it be necessary for him, in order to impress his audience, to indulge in the elaborate *delsarte* of a Bremen *kapellmeister*? Let us, in the name of the Regent, lay all such motions on the table! In the play I started out to criticize some pages back—and didn't—Miss Irene Fenwick pleases me particularly. Her acting, however, might be praised with greater

seriousness if she were to do her hair up more becomingly.

By manner of concealing the actual reason for the indefeasible wrestle with Shakespeare toward which our native mummery would seem by and large ultimately to itch, it is the custom of the forenamed mummery, once they have publicly laid to with the Bard, to distill interviews in which they make arch observation that "we are only doing Shakespeare because we are unable to obtain contemporaneous plays worth doing." The contrary truth, obviously, being that they are only doing Shakespeare because it is a tradition and a fact of our American theater that to do Shakespeare, however badly, is thenceforth to be held in profound veneration over the less bumptious performer who has done something else, however well. Four out of five actors who do battle with Shakespeare do so, not because they admire Shakespeare or because, as they pretend, they are unable to obtain suitable modern plays, or because they are consumed with the artistic desire to do something fine for the sake of its fine doing, but because of an overwhelming surge of personal conceit—to which they are willing even to sacrifice the hard-won savings of years, for Shakespeare they full well know is a losing stage feat in these times—a largely baseless conceit to tilt against the rosemary scrapbooks of the dinned-in Shakespearean actors of another day. For the majority of these misled minstrel children of the theater, I have only sympathy. I, too, have my share of innocent and absurd vanities; and I can understand. Miss Margaret Anglin has visited us with herself in "As You Like It," "The Taming of the Shrew" and "Twelfth Night." Fresh from a contemplation of the first and third of these tournaments, I still see no reason to withdraw my prefatory contention.

Incidentally, among the events of the first of the trinity of performances, were "pitiliss" for "pitiless," "ordinary" for "ordinary," "markits" for "markets," "nawt" for "not," "lends-uh" for "lends," "byouyouty" for "beauty" and "time wuz" for "time was."

THE HARP, THE SACKBUT AND THE PSALTERY

By H. L. Mencken

UNLESS the newspapers lied about it at the time, the sturdy freemen of Grove City, Pa., were of late assaulted and made a mock of by a mysterious pestilence of cramps, the which doubled them into lover's knots and turned their native optimism to gall and wormwood. What caused this murrain among honest folk no man knoweth. Some speak of underdone mollusks at the oyster supper in the Baptist church; others blame it on the sun spots; yet others dismiss the whole affair as no more than an idle jocosity of the devil, in his usual bad taste.

As for me, I have no theory to offer, and don't care a hoot about it. My only reason for mentioning the matter at all is to express a pious hope that the Hon. I. N. Fithian, Grove City's favorite bard, did not lose his parts of speech in that mad tarantella. On such a catastrophe the tears would gush indeed, for the Hon. Mr. Fithian is one of the few minnesingers in the spring herd whose *lieder* issue straight from the heart, *sans* artifice, *sans* straining. What could be simpler, what could be sincerer, and what, when all is said and done, could be lovelier than these mellow strophes to Miss Alice:

I know a girl, her name's Alice;
Not a bit of guile or malice,
Form so dainty, cheeks red and fair,
Sunny glories shine in her hair.

For she can wash and scrub and bake,
Can make a pie or turn a cake.
She's good enough for any man;
I'll go and get her if I can.

She is so sweet, so neat and clean,
Never stoops to things low and mean,
And she can cook the best of stew,
And custards good enough for you.

I'll go to work and build a palace,
Go tell my darling Alice,
"I've got the cage, so come along,
And fill my palace full of song."

And what he is in the pink doublet
and embroidered smalls of Romeo, that
Fithian is again in the carpet slippers
and senile hemp of Polonius—and even
more so. To wit:

I saw him when he courted her,
She sweetly hung upon his arm,
And he was very tender then,
For fear that she would come to harm.

But very few of fleeting days
Passed ere he had grown cold to her.
She does not hang upon his arm,
Now he don't seem to care for her.

I wish he had a mother-in-law
To call him to his duty.
His wife is just as pleasant now,
But just wearing out her beauty.

It's long we live and long we love,
When hearts are true and tender;
But if a man don't love his wife
Then may kind heaven defend her!

I hack the poem down to its rudiments in each case; you will find the complete text in "PILGRIM'S THOUGHTS" (*Shakespeare Press*). In the same volume you will also find "Herod," a religio-economic diatribe in four cantos. Again I sacrifice beauty to space:

Old Herod ruled in Bethlehem,
Pronounced by all a cruel man.
He sent his minions out to slay
The little babes on that sad day.
Poor Rachel mourned without relief
And that old fox laughed at her grief.

How is it with those that rule today?
The blood of babes still marks their way!

They do it with a smirk, a smile,
Nor lift their feet from off the child.

Protect the brewers and the bloats
In cutting little children's throats!
Oh, men! forbear this cruel wrong!
Have mercy on the child! You're strong!
And go not with the brewer man
Your neighbor's child to crush and damn!

"PILGRIM'S THOUGHTS," so one learns by the preface, is but the first volume of a projected series. The author has "enough written to make nine or ten," and they will be struck off as the world demands them. A postcard addressed to the Hon. I. N. Fithian, at Grove City, Pa., will be appreciated, particularly if it bears an order for the whole series. The poet will file all such orders as they are received, and each succeeding volume will be dispatched to subscribers the moment it leaves the press.

So, too, with the bilingual burlings of Prof. George Keller De Long, of Box No. 35, Pennsburg, Pa., another Keystone bard. Prof. De Long's compositions are in two languages, Pennsylvania Dutch and Pennsylvania English, and they already run to five volumes, all of which are to be had postpaid for seventy-five cents. What is more, the genial poet offers to split even, as the bookmakers say, with admirers who get him orders. "Anyone who has bought this little book at ten cents," he says in his "IDYLS OF A LOVER," "can easily make a little spending by taking orders of his friends who want it, and forward me half the money." "A little spending," it appears, is Pennsylvania English for *trinkgeld*. But let us proceed from the poet to his poems, and in particular to his "To My Love":

Dearest only—
Hovering ever in my dreams,
Constantly haunting me in my waking,
Stirring my heart into convulsions,
And setting my jaws grinding;
My teeth are worn with gnashing—
My head is heavy
And my heart is full.

High lifts thy head above perpetual freezing
altitudes,
Low lies my heart—a constant burning
Like the depth of a boiling geyser.

And to his incomparable song, "The
Prodigal Reclaimed":

A maiden fair once loved a vagabond,
She knew his sins, yet this could not astound.
She hoped, she pled, she strove him to
reclaim;
And he, in anguish, often would exclaim:

CHORUS

It breaks my heart to have you love me so—
Your fond caresses fill my heart with woe;
For I deserve not love but bitter hate.
I'm done—I know your love has come too
late.

He drank, he gambled—lived a life in vain,
Despite his sins her love did never wane.
When all was spent, and he was on the
bum,
She took him in, when from his lips would
come:

CHORUS

It breaks my heart, etc., etc.

But in the end, of course, she got him. "She fawned, caressed—in ways such as beget a feeling strange, unmanly any man." And then he changed his tune from "It breaks my heart," etc., etc., to "It cheers my heart," etc., etc. A mellifluous, moral *chanson*, sweetly free from the licentiousness that I shall mention anon. In Pennsylvania Dutch, as in Pennsylvania English, Prof. De Long is succinct, succulent and successful. Thus, for example, in a tale of young love:

De Maryann wor yoocht en kinnd,
En kinnd wor ich yoozt aw,
Duch harvre ich uft im harrts gawinsht
Icht het se forr my fraw.

De Maryann war finf yor oldd,
Oon ich wor sell net gons,
Duch harvre ich shoon gawist galeebt
Wee'n mon'cher foon may mons.

Let Pennsylvania do honor to this pair of virtuous sackbutters—her Byron J. Elmore and her J. Gordon Cooglar. Say what you will against them, they at least pluck the raucous C string for righteousness in all its branches, and so their harpings must fall balmily upon the ears of every right-thinking and forward-looking man. What a contrast one encounters in the lush, levantine whoops and snortings of Prof. Donald Evans, whose "SONNETS FROM THE PATAGONIAN" (*Marie*) are full of mad, mad stuff, indeed—heroes who go crazy with love, and bump their heads against the furniture, and kiss with a degree of intensity suggesting a bite, and have fireworks in their brains—heroines who

try to rouge their hearts, and are "wrapped in a whispered perfume of the dead," and have wardrobes of a thousand gowns, and gnaw at their lovers' ears—strange, sinful folk who perform endless cadenzas upon weird flutes in E flat, and mix ptomaines in their cock-tails, and "erect tombstones to carnalities," and wear shoes costing two hundred francs a pair, and regard life as "an orchid that is dead," and sigh pathetically for the brave old days of Brigham Young and Lucretia Borgia, before ever Anthony Comstock came down from New Canaan and stirred up Congress against advanced minds. Thus the habits of one of these spicy devils:

Gay and audacious crime glints in his eyes,
And his mad talk, raping the commonplace,
Gleefully runs a devil-praising race,
And none can ever follow where he flies.
He streaks himself with vices tenderly;
He cradles sin, and with a figleaf fan
Taps his green cat, watching the round suns
span
The wasted minutes to eternity.

This one, or another, beats his gal to make her love him, and she sets up a deafening noise in protest, but he keeps on until "her screams are muffled by a brackish fog"—though where the fog comes from is not stated. Thus the effect upon his own emotions:

He taught her that all tenderness had fled
Till she would beg the hurt to taste the tear,
And when she bent to kiss her crumpled heart
It lit a Chinese candle in his head.

It is the same girl, I dare say, who had the alarming adventures in the "tragic turnip field" described in the sonnet entitled "Her Smile." First, with "her two white hands she stroked her fears"; then a serpent popped up out of the ground and "peered at her pink ears"; then "a noise was in her eyes"; then "round her voice there gleamed a nameless dread"; then she heard "scarlet screams," and finally, she "grasped a monotone." Obviously, we are here among the futurists in amour, the Schoenbergs and Debussys of deviltry, the beyond-Vierecks. The banal sensualities of the Philistine are as ashes in their mouths. It gives them no delight to notice that the girl across the aisle is wearing her own hair, has a healthy epi-

dermis and is coquettishly talcumed on the nose. Such commonplace houris they resign to the tired business man. What they demand is beauty that is fantastic, outlandish, byzantine—rouged hearts, bubbling sneers, fawn-colored laughs, tarnished hair, lyrical skin, manganese tears, cold lips, hexagonal knees, sclerotic hips, monosyllabic eyebrows, purple dandruff, subconscious teeth, ears like buckwheat cakes, necks in B flat minor, chins as delicately vehement as marshmallows. And in philosophy, as in beauty, they avoid as a plague the obvious note, the ammoniacal flavor of the schools, the sough of Tupper. As witness:

There is what is and what there is is fair,
But most is yet to come to what is here;
Here is the most to come from out a year
For from the year there comes all there is there.

Find me a barber who can understand it without a glossary—or a hotel clerk, or a college professor, or a newspaper reporter—and I'll flout Comstock by sending you the book. And find me a Sunday school superintendent who is not shocked out of his boots by "FLAGONS AND WINE" (*Grafton*), by John Robinson Jeffers, and I'll show you a Sunday school superintendent who needs a warning crack across the knuckles. Here, indeed, we have fleshly stuff, moral toxins, a subtle incitement to indiscretion. I quote:

I was but a drunken poet,
She a Fenestrella waitress;
But one month I loved her truly,
She, one month, was not a traitress.

In the evenings in the garden
How we kissed behind the lilacs!
While the scent of the wine was mingled
With the perfume of the smilax.

King nor queen had e'er such pleasure
Out of love—the high Gods know it!
She was just a pretty waitress,
I a mad and drunken poet.

And elsewhere (amid much suave and grateful verse, I must admit) Mr. Jeffers is full of dark hints about "the madness of desire," "wild longings that never cease," "mad thoughts," "the old pleading, the old dear pain," and finally, "the old fierce fire that burned Archilochus" (c. 650 B. C.). And through it all runs

the pessimism of one grown weary of passion, the bitter gloom of a post-graduate:

And drunken I will ride and sing,
And drunken think not of the past.
My heart that died a year ago
Says, One can always die at last!

Not even a tear for the girl left behind: she ought to have known that there was poison in the cup:

And yet it was not my fault,
Nor yours; you wept on the morrow.
Can the sea be empty of salt,
Or love of sorrow?

But what are we to think of a bard who fills a whole volume with just such sad and sinful things—and then hastens to add, in an epilogue, that he really never did anything of the sort, that he has imagined the whole scandal? And yet that is exactly what Mr. Jeffers does! "I . . . have spoken no word," he says, "of my life as it is." The intrigues described with such unction and gusto are

The love of fools, forlorn and forgot,
And loves of men that witches have caught,
And loves enough, God wot; but not
The loves I have lived, nor the life I could write.

This confession is not only surprising, but, to tell the truth, also very disquieting. Can it be that poets run to that sort of play acting habitually—that Dante, after all, never knew a lady named Beatrice, that Oscar Wilde was never in jail, that Omar Khayyám was a teetotaler and a vestryman, that Swinburne was a member of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, that Rossetti couldn't have distinguished chloral from castor oil, that the Prof. Donald Evans before-mentioned has never actually seen a girl with a "fawn-colored laugh," or "tarnished hair," or a "crumpled heart," and has never worn shoes worth two hundred francs a pair? If so, then the whole art of poetry goes to the deminution bow-wows, and Louis Untermeyer becomes a respectable Knight of Pythias. The thing, alas, is not only possible, but even probable—it has, in fact, its parallel in prose. My oldest son, a sophomore in the Union Theological Seminary, is an ardent admirer of George Nathan, and while he was home

for the Christmas holidays, he amused himself by re-reading all of George's contributions to *THE SMART SET* for three years back. He tells me that he found accounts of no less than thirty-eight affairs of the heart in them and of a hundred and twenty drinking bouts, some of them described with the greatest particularity. And yet George, as everyone knows, is a model husband and father, and his daughters would be shocked to hear of his taking so much as a pony of Löwenbräu.

Which is a good excuse, perhaps, for leaping over a lot of bad poetry without taking more than one sharp look at it. For example, "TO THE LOST FRIEND" (*Sherman-French*), a hundred sonnets by Auguste Angellier, translated from the French by Mildred J. Knight and Charles E. Murphy. Smooth enough sonneteering, but melancholy, moony, monotonous. Half a dozen would be agreeable, and twenty would be tolerable—but a hundred! Who would want to listen to a hundred Chopin nocturnes, or eat a hundred chocolate eclairs, or kiss a hundred girls in a hundred seconds? And so with "BLUEETS," by Mary A. Buttles (*Broadway*), a thin book of old, old songs, sung in the old, old way. And so with "FAINT CHORDS," by George Scheftel (*Radical Pub. Co.*), the honest strivings of a naïve and presumably tone-deaf jingler—"fluid" rhymed with "flute," "use" (the noun) with "hues," "clothes" with "rose." The poet is a progressive in all senses:

Life is nothing but a struggle
To uplift the human mind. . . .

Thou didst remind me of a gypsy queen
Whom once on motion pictures I have seen.

And when he gets hold of a good word he is not above repeating it:

The snow fell, fell, fell,
The white flaky snow fell;
Oh, how chilling it fell,
On the hill and dell,
How it sparkled all over the grass!

This last reminds me of an astounding piece of doggerel in Stephen Phillips' new book of "LYRICS AND DRAMAS" (*Lane*). It is called "The Fireman" and opens as follows:

His foe is fire, fire, fire!
Hark to his hoarse dispersing cry,
From his path asunder fly!
Speed! or men and women die,
For his foe is fire, fire!

There is, of course, better stuff than this in the book—there could scarcely be worse—but in general it is a sorry performance for a man of Mr. Phillips' talents. The lyrics are inept and un-beautiful, the blank verse is only occasionally sonorous, and through it all there runs a childish hunkerousness, a silly affectation of the anti-scientific manner. I pick out a bad song and pass on:

Sad is the crystal tear
From eyes of youth,
Sadder the slower drops
Of married ruth.

Sad tears of maid or wife,
Brimming to fall;
Often the tearless eye
Saddest of all.

"THE VICTORY OF DEFEAT," by Fanny De Groot Hastings (*Harriman*), is full of the harmless, homely pieties of the Poet's Corner, and so is the volume of "POETICAL WORKS," by Rose Hartwick Thorpe (*Neale*), author of "Curfew Shall Not Ring Tonight." In "THE FLOOD OF YOUTH," by Sherwood Spencer (*Fifield*), despite an introduction by Sargeant Whittemore, telling of "haunting beauty" within and hinting that the author may be another Symons or Dowson, I can find nothing but the shallow rhymes that all of us make when we are young. "My interest in Spencer's verses," says Mr. Whittemore, "was aroused after reading 'Taps' in a service paper and learning that the author was a midshipman." Here is "Taps":

Out of the night a bugle blows,
Soft and clear the cadence flows,
Sweeter, stronger still it grows—
Taps is sounding.

Sobbing low the last note goes,
Now no more the tent light flows,
Soldier's day is at its close—
Taps has sounded.

This, of course, is not poetry at all, but merely a rhymed statement of fact—a thing with no more beauty of thought or phrase in it than the first seventeen verses of Matthew.

In the "POEMS" of Herbert Kaufman (*Doran*) we come upon that virtuous voluptuousness which is the delight of suffragettes, vice crusaders, sex hygienists and other such Peeping Toms of the uplift. Of the forty-five so-called poems in the book, at least six are little more than metrical versions of the more pious parts of the Chicago Vice Report, and as many others are full of gratuitous sexual images. In one entitled "Ambition," for example, that admirable quality, so ardently hymned by the late Samuel Smiles, D.D., is first represented as a goddess who demands that her "lovers" be "strong . . . straight-backed and straight of knee," and later as a god who "rapes" stars from "the brow of Night." This last figure seems to be especially pleasing to Mr. Kaufman. He uses it again in a jingle called "You," in which no less a personage than the Creator Himself is pictured as "raping" the "seas of Ind for pearls" to adorn the poet's beloved! But do not get the notion, I prithee, that this Mr. Kaufman is a loose and ribald fellow—a new Swinburne, a magazine Verlaine. Oh, dear, no! On the contrary, he is a merchant of mellow moralities, a rhapsodical Orison Swett Marden, a true prophet of the New Thought in ethics. The Hon. Ben. B. Lindsay himself could not whoop for chemical purity more passionately. Almost every one of his "poems" has an affecting moral, well rubbed in. He is red-hot for righteousness.

Let us not waste any wind in protest against this salacious sniveling. Within a year or two the land will be filled with just such poets. The uplift will hatch them inevitably, as it has already hatched its huge crops of bogus scientists and lady pornographers. The great problem of prostitution, which has engaged and baffled all the rulers of the human race since Solomon, is now discussed openly and at length by flappers with their skirts at their shoe tops, and settled out of hand by a multitude of oleaginous chautauquans, snide preachers, "reform" politicians, medical press agents and half-baked college professors, each with something to sell. In place

of the hearty, healthy animalism of "The Black Crook" and the frank hogghishness of "The Turtle" and "Dear Old Charlie," we now have the insidious, quasi-scientific smut of "Damaged Goods." Instead of grossness half concealed by wit and beauty, we now have it laid bare by a prying, snouting virtue. Our young girls, ten or fifteen years ago, read "Sapho" surreptitiously, and thought that they were devilish. Today they read the degraded rubbish of Christabel Pankhurst openly, and think that they are angelic. Such is the uplift. Such is "sex hygiene."

But to other bards, major and minor! Among the latter I find a number whose talents are certainly not to be sniffed at. For instance, Kenneth Rand, whose "THE DIRGE OF THE SEA CHILDREN" (*Sherman-French*), contains a dozen or more truly excellent songs of the open road, afloat and ashore, and two or three other very pretty things. And Horace Holley, whose "THE INNER GARDEN" (*Sherman-French*), despite much of commonplace, is redeemed by "A Landscape in New England," a piece of pictorial writing that better poets might be glad to own. And Anne Richardson Talbot, who mingles a facile style and genuine poetic feeling in "THE GARDEN OF LIFE" (*Sherman-French*). And above all, Samuel Loveman (of the tribe of Robert?), whose thin book of "POEMS" shows a delicate and highly agreeable fancy, though yet, perhaps, but half in flower:

This is the way the moon comes up
From under the glimmering fallow fields;
First but the rim of a silver cup,
Where the farthest twilight primrose yields
Her earthly beauty up;
And now where the deep light winks abrim,
You can see it flutter and fail for breath,
And a single star falls rapt and dim—
I call it Death.

Here I leap "THE FLIGHT," by George Edward Woodberry (*Macmillan*), and two books by Madison Cawein, "MINIONS OF THE MOON" and "THE REPUBLIC" (*Stewart-Kidd*), not because there is not good verse in them, but simply because it is verse that leaves me cold. In such matters, much must be allowed to personal taste and prejudice—think

of the Brahms controversy, the row over Whistler, the Thackeray-Dickens war! Mr. Cawein is intoxicated with the beauty of roadside and meadow, of woodland lake and bosky dell, of moonlit orchard and fairy-haunted thicket, and he puts that beauty into workmanlike lines; but somehow I am not lifted by them—they do not make me glow. Nor am I stirred by Prof. Woodberry's well-mannered Hellenic rhapsodies, the polished periods of a gentleman. They are urbane, they are cultured, and I am even prepared to admit that some of them are beautiful, but when I put the best of them beside Miss Reese's "Tears," or Kipling's "Dirge of Dead Sisters," or even "Jim Bludsoe," they turn into empty shells, cold shadows, mere ghosts of poems. Which mention of "Tears" recalls the fact that William Stanley Braithwaite, the Boston critic, lately found its poetical heir in the *Bellman* and has reprinted it in his "ANTHOLOGY OF MAGAZINE VERSE FOR 1913," a valuable collection, painstakingly and intelligently chosen. This heir is "November," by Mahlon Leonard Fisher, and I here set it down:

Hark you such sound as quivers? Kings will
hear,
As kings have heard, and tremble on their
thrones;
The old will feel the weight of mossy stones;
The young alone will laugh and scoff at fear.
It is the tread of armies marching near,
From scarlet lands to lands forever pale;
It is a bugle dying down the gale;
It is the sudden gushing of a tear.
And it is hands that grope at ghostly doors;
And romp of spirit children on the pave;
It is the tender sighing of the brave
Who fell, ah! long ago, in futile wars;
It is such sound as death; and, after all,
'Tis but the forest letting dead leaves fall.

No need to argue that Prof. Braithwaite's praise is well deserved, though I, for one, think that the approach to "Tears" is very remote. This sonnet of Fisher's, indeed, is a thing full of the true sonnet spirit—that mixture of simplicity and solemnity, of beauty and dignity, which all of us know so well, but which no one can quite describe in words.

Of Rabindranath Tagore I might now discourse at length, for two of his books

come next, but I suppose you have already had your fill of him. He has been as well press-agented as that Pastor Wagner who filled the yellow journals back in Rooseveltian days, or as Prof. Dr. Guglielmo Ferrero, or as Jane Addams, or as Maxim Gorki. In the woman's clubs he has played a loud second to the slit skirt, the social evil and the Montessori method. Some of the newspapers—e.g., the *New York Evening Post*—have paid almost as much attention to him as they have given to General Villa or to the tango. Observing all this, it was my natural inference, of course, that the hon. gentleman was merely another nine days' wonder, a new pet of the pishful, the latest mountebank. But I had not read more than a few pages of "THE GARDENER" (*Macmillan*) before my system was purged of this facile and light-headed verdict. What I found, if not actually great poetry, was at least poetry of an undeniable grace and elevation, poetry sound and thoughtful, and, allowing for the differences between Eastern and Western standards, full of a positive beauty. Tagore is not to be compared to any of our own bards: the thing he tries to do with words is never quite the thing that they try to do. He is a thorough Oriental, not only in his modes of expression but also in his modes of thought, and this fact must be kept in mind in estimating him. We have learned to do that in reading the rhapsodical books of the Old Testament, and we should be able to do it in reading such things as this love song:

If you would have it so, I will end my singing.
 If it sets your heart aflutter, I will take away
 my eyes from your face.
 If it suddenly startles you in your walk, I will
 step aside and take another path.
 If it confuses you in your flower-weaving, I
 will shun your lonely garden.
 If it makes the water wanton and wild, I will
 not row my boat by your bank.

And this fine call to joy:

Over the green and yellow rice fields sweep
 the shadows of the autumn clouds followed by
 the swift-chasing sun.

The bees forget to sip their honey; drunken
 with light they foolishly hover and hum.

The ducks in the islands of the river clamor
 in joy for mere nothing.

Let none go back home, brothers, this morn-
 ing, let none go to work.

Let us take the blue sky by storm and plun-
 der space as we run.

Laughter floats in the air like foam on the
 flood.

Brothers, let us squander our morning in
 futile songs.

As I have said, I shrink from writing
 more upon one deluged by such copious
 writing, but maybe you, too, have been
 alarmed by all the pother, and so failed
 to read Tagore. I think you will get
 great pleasure, as I have, out of many
 of his poems, and especially out of his
 noble ode to Death, beginning, "Why
 do you whisper so faintly in my ears, O
 Death, my Death?" and out of his lines
 to Mother Earth, and his love songs,
 and his apostrophe to Woman.

One thing, at least, all our young poets
 might learn from Tagore, and that is
 the virtue of brevity. Poe was right:
 it is always hard going after the hun-
 dredth line. I read through Robert
 W. Service's "RHYMES OF A ROLLING
 STONE" (*Dodd-Mead*), and find that all
 the good verses in it are short ones and
 most of the bad ones long ones. And
 in the "MERCHANTS FROM CATHAY," of
 William Rose Benét (*Century*), I find
 excellent ideas spoiled by reiteration—
 by an elephantiasis of what the mu-
 sicians call the development section.
 And even in the "LOVE AND DELIB-
 ERATION," "THE BELOVED ADVENT-
 URE" and "THE HUMAN FANTASY" of
 John Hall Wheelock (*Sherman-French*),
 though the form is usually that of the
 short lyric, a bad effect is often pro-
 duced by hanging these lyrics together
 in series. Here, for example, is one of
 Mr. Benét's excellent songs:

I remember my mother
 In the deep still night time
 When books were on the shelves again
 And toys were put away,
 When the moonlight filled my bedroom
 And the shadow time, the flight time
 Of happy, sleepy memories
 Remade the merry day.

How soft the door was opened,
 How swift she stole upon me,
 With covers for my carelessness,
 Awake enough to see
 Her silver dress of silentness,
 Her wistful brows that won me;

To feel her touch upon me,
And the way she looked at me!

This is a truly beautiful poem; there is feeling in it, and simplicity; it is full of a wistfulness that stands quite clear of sentimentality; its effect upon every reader must be to awaken memories that are infinitely precious and abiding. But then Mr. Benét rewrites the whole thing in two more stanzas, greatly to its hurt. Those extra stanzas, in themselves, are anything but bad, but they do nothing to help the mood, they are useless weights upon the song. However, this Mr. Benét, rid of his youthful exuberance, will make a poet to be reckoned with, or I miss my guess. He is melodious, he is ardent and he is original—a genuine maker and singer, doing things in his own way. It is long since I have found anything better than his sonorous lines on "Paternity" in the book of a débutante, or, for that matter, his "Braggarts," or his "I Saw an Angel Standing in the Sun," or his "Falsorum Cultor," with its fine plea for that search for the unattainable which is at the heart of all poetry.

Another of our younger poets with genuine music in him is Mr. Wheelock, many of whose verses, during the past year or two, have appeared in THE SMART SET. The best of them, I think, are in "THE HUMAN FANTASY," a collection of fine songs of the city, and particularly of love and youth in the city. Here is a specimen, the first in the book:

I see you stand before me—
Bizarre, absurd, enchanting—
(The swinging, silver satchel,
The dear ridiculous dress.)

A little, dauntless figure,
Half lost in the enormous
Gay picture hat bowed forward
Across the eager face.

Its single feather trembles
Against the dusk. Beyond you
The squalid, huddled city
With one red, flaring lamp.

Looms sinister and haunting,
—The wastes that bred and bore you—
A mockery heart-breaking,
A menace and a joke.

But you stand all unknowing—
Glad-hearted, well and reckless,
Magnanimous and merry,
My lost one—O my youth!

Following this come a dozen other city scenes and fantasies—the Italian restaurant, the beggars by the street side, the ships in harbor, the tryst on the corner, the chaos and turmoil of downtown. All of our poets, in late years, have essayed to pipe of paving stones (following Charles G. D. Roberts and his half-forgotten "New York Nocturnes"), but not many of them have come as close to the eternal sadness of the crowd as Mr. Wheelock. In brief, he has made good poetry upon it, and that good poetry excuses some of the other stuff, decidedly not good poetry, that he has added for *lagnappe*. But this is not saying, of course, that the city is the one thing he can sing. He has done good lyrics upon other themes, and you will find them scattered thickly through his three volumes. For example:

Out of my sorrow I have made this song,
To comfort whom it will:
She whom I love answered my love with hate,
But love she could not kill.

And now I know, I sing it ten times over;
Though to be loved be well,
More gladness than looks down with Hate from
heaven
Looks up with love from hell!

Here endeth the lesson—all save the closing psalm. I sing it in praise of two books, "THE DRIFT OF PINIONS," by Marjorie L. C. Pickthall (*Lane*), and "SALT WATER BALLADS," by John Masefield (*Macmillan*). Two books of utter joy! Two books that make all the rest seem hollow and futile things! I not only commend them to you: I urge you to read them. And on your delight in them I stake my life, my fortune and my sacred honor. If there is a second Lizette Reese, then Miss Pickthall is that second: her lyrics are of pure loveliness all compact. And if there is a second Kipling, then that No. 2 is Masefield: his rousing ballads will lift you like "Danny Deever" and "Mandalay." I am not going to tell you what keen and lasting pleasure I have got out of these volumes. Go explore them for yourself!